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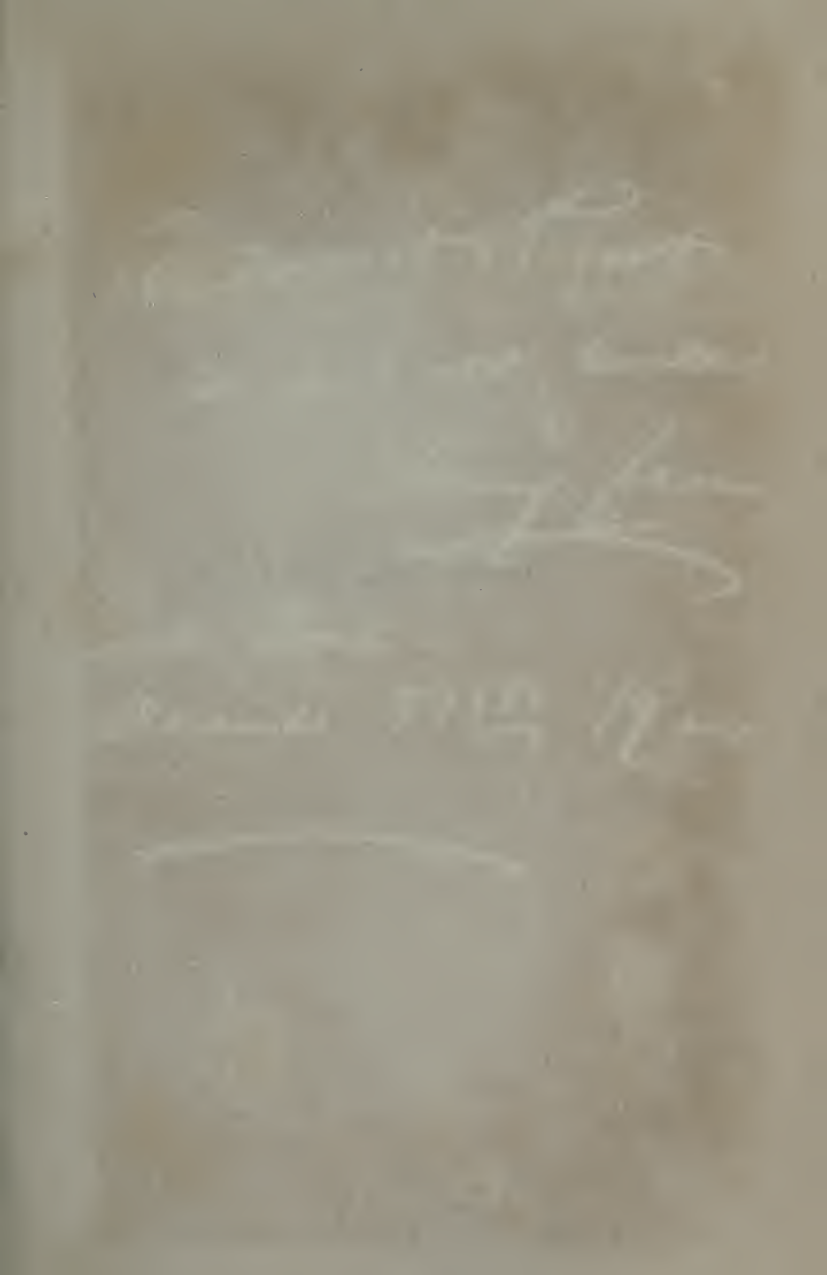

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WESTWARD HO!

"DUX FŒMINA FACTI."

Motto of the Armada Medals, 1588.

Charles Kingsley

London, Macmillan & Co° 1881

WESTWARD HO!

OR

THE VOYAGES AND ADVENTURES OF

Sir Amyas Leigh, Knight,

OF BURROUGH, IN THE COUNTY OF DEVON,
IN THE REIGN OF HER MOST GLORIOUS MAJESTY
QUEEN ELIZABETH

RENDERED INTO MODERN ENGLISH

BY CHARLES KINGSLEY

IN TWO VOLS.—VOL. I.

London
MACMILLAN AND CO.
1881

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TO

THE RAJAH SIR JAMES BROOKE, K.C.B.

AND

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SELWYN, D.D.

BISHOP OF NEW ZEALAND

This Book is Dedicated

BY ONE WHO (UNKNOWN TO THEM) HAS NO OTHER METHOD OF EXPRESSING HIS ADMIRATION AND REVERENCE FOR THEIR CHARACTERS.

THAT TYPE OF ENGLISH VIRTUE, AT ONCE MANFUL AND GODLY, PRACTICAL AND ENTHUSIASTIC, PRUDENT AND SELF-SACRIFICING, WHICH HE HAS TRIED TO DEPICT IN THESE PAGES, THEY HAVE EXHIBITED IN A FORM EVEN PURER AND MORE HEROIC THAN THAT IN WHICH HE HAS DREST IT, AND THAN THAT IN WHICH IT WAS EXHIBITED BY THE WORTHIES WHOM ELIZABETH, WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF RANK OR AGE, GATHERED ROUND HER IN THE EVER GLORIOUS WARS OF HER GREAT REIGN.

C. K.

February 1855.

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WESTWARD HO!

CHAPTER I.

HOW MR. OXENHAM SAW THE WHITE BIRD.

"The hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea."

ALL who have travelled through the delicious scenery of North Devon must needs know the little white town of Bideford, which slopes upwards from its broad tide-river paved with yellow sands, and many-arched old bridge where salmon wait for Autumn floods, toward the pleasant upland on the west. Above the town the hills close in, cushioned with deep oak woods, through which juts here and there a crag of fern-fringed slate; below they lower, and open more and more in softly-rounded knolls, and fertile squares of red and green, till they sink into the wide expanse of hazy flats, rich salt marshes, and rolling sand hills, where Torridge joins her sister Taw, and both together flow quietly toward the broad surges of the bar, and the everlasting thunder of the long Atlantic swell. Pleasantly the old town stands there, beneath its soft Italian sky, fanned day and night by

the fresh ocean breeze, which forbids alike the keen winter frosts, and the fierce thunder heats of the midland; and pleasantly it has stood there for now, perhaps, eight hundred years since the first Grenvil, cousin of the Conqueror, returning from the conquest of South Wales, drew round him trusty Saxon serfs, and free Norse rovers with their golden curls, and dark Silurian Britons from the Swansea shore, and all the mingled blood which still gives to the seaward folk of the next county their strength and intellect, and, even in these levelling days, their peculiar beauty of face and form.

But at the time whereof I write, Bideford was not merely a pleasant country town, whose quay was haunted by a few coasting craft. It was one of the chief ports of England; it furnished seven ships to fight the Armada: even more than a century afterwards, say the chroniclers, "it sent more vessels to the northern trade, than any port in England, saving (strange juxtaposition!) London and Topsham," and was the centre of a local civilisation and enterprise, small perhaps compared with the vast efforts of the present day: but who dare despise the day of small things, if it has proved to be the dawn of mighty ones? And it is to the sea-life and labour of Bideford, and Dartmouth, and Topsham, and Plymouth (then a petty place), and many another little western town, that England owes the foundation of her naval and commercial glory. It was the men of Devon, the Drakes and Hawkins', Gilberts and Raleighs, Grenviles and Oxenhams, and a host more of "for-

gotten worthies," whom we shall learn one day to honour as they deserve, to whom she owes her commerce, her colonies, her very existence. For had they not first crippled, by their West Indian raids, the ill-gotten resources of the Spaniard, and then crushed his last huge effort in Britain's Salamis, the glorious fight of 1588, what had we been by now, but a Popish appanage of a world-tyranny as cruel as heathen Rome itself, and far more devilish?

It is in memory of these men, their voyages and their battles, their faith and their valour, their heroic lives and no less heroic deaths, that I write this book; and if now and then I shall seem to warm into a style somewhat too stilted and pompous, let me be excused for my subject's sake, fit rather to have been sung than said, and to have proclaimed to all true English hearts, not as a novel but as an epic (which some man may yet gird himself to write), the same great message which the songs of Troy, and the Persian wars, and the trophies of Marathon and Salamis, spoke to the hearts of all true Greeks of old.

One bright summer's afternoon, in the year of grace 1575, a tall and fair boy came lingering along Bideford quay, in his scholar's gown, with satchel and slate in hand, watching wistfully the shipping and the sailors, till, just after he had passed the bottom of the High Street, he came opposite to one of the many taverns which looked out upon the river. In the open bay-window sat merchants and gentlemen, discoursing over their afternoon's draught of sack; and

outside the door was gathered a group of sailors, listening earnestly to some one who stood in the midst. The boy, all alive for any sea-news, must needs go up to them, and take his place among the sailor-lads who were peeping and whispering under the elbows of the men; and so came in for the following speech, delivered in a loud bold voice, with a strong Devonshire accent, and a fair sprinkling of oaths.

"If you don't believe me, go and see, or stay here and grow all over blue mould. I tell you, as I am a gentleman, I saw it with these eyes, and so did Salvation Yeo there, through a window in the lower room; and we measured the heap, as I am a Christened man, seventy foot long, ten foot broad, and twelve foot high, of silver bars, and each bar between a thirty and forty pound weight. And says Captain Drake: 'There, my lads of Devon, I've brought you to the mouth of the world's treasure-house, and it's your own fault now, if you don't sweep it out as empty as a stock-fish.'"

"Why didn't you bring some of they home, then, Mr. Oxenham?"

"Why weren't you there to help to carry them? We would have brought 'em away, safe enough, and young Drake and I had broke the door abroad already, but Captain Drake goes off in a dead faint; and when we came to look, he had a wound in his leg you might have laid three fingers in, and his boots were full of blood, and had been for an hour or more; but the heart of him was that, that he never knew it till he

dropped, and then his brother and I got him away to the boats, he kicking and struggling, and bidding us let him go on with the fight, though every step he took in the sand was in a pool of blood; and so we got off. And tell me, ye sons of shotten herrings, wasn't it worth more to save him than the dirty silver? for silver we can get again, brave boys: there's more fish in the sea than ever came out of it, and more silver in Nombre de Dios than would pave all the streets in the west country: but of such captains as Franky Drake, heaven never makes but one at a time; and if we lose him, good-bye to England's luck, say I, and who don't agree, let him choose his weapons, and I'm his man."

He who delivered this harangue was a tall and sturdy personage, with a florid black-bearded face, and bold restless dark eyes, who leaned, with crossed legs and arms akimbo, against the wall of the house; and seemed in the eyes of the school-boy a very magnifico, some prince or duke at least. He was dressed (contrary to all sumptuary laws of the time) in a suit of crimson velvet, a little the worse, perhaps, for wear; by his side were a long Spanish rapier and a brace of daggers, gaudy enough about the hilts; his fingers sparkled with rings; he had two or three gold chains about his neck, and large earrings in his ears, behind one of which a red rose was stuck jauntily enough among the glossy black curls; on his head was a broad velvet Spanish hat, in which instead of a feather was fastened with a great gold clasp a whole Quezal bird, whose gorgeous plumage of fretted golden green shone

like one entire precious stone. As he finished his speech, he took off the said hat, and looking at the bird in it—

"Look ye, my lads, did you ever see such a fowl as that before? That's the bird which the old Indian kings of Mexico let no one wear but their own selves; and therefore I wear it,—I, John Oxenham of South Tawton, for a sign to all brave lads of Devon, that as the Spaniards are the masters of the Indians, we're the masters of the Spaniards:" and he replaced his hat.

A murmur of applause followed: but one hinted that he "doubted the Spaniards were too many for them."

"Too many? How many men did we take Nombre de Dios with? Seventy-three were we, and no more when we sailed out of Plymouth Sound; and before we saw the Spanish main, half were 'gastados,' used up, as the Dons say, with the scurvy; and in Port Pheasant Captain Rawse of Cowes fell in with us, and that gave us some thirty hands more; and with that handful, my lads, only fifty-three in all, we picked the lock of the new world! And whom did we lose but our trumpeter, who stood braying like an ass in the middle of the square, instead of taking care of his neck like a Christian? I tell you, those Spaniards are rank cowards, as all bullies are. They pray to a woman, the idolatrous rascals! and no wonder they fight like women."

"You'm right, Captain," sang out a tall gaunt fellow who stood close to him; "one westcountryman

can fight two easterlings, and an easterling can beat three Dons any day. Eh! my lads of Devon?

"For O! it's the herrings and the good brown beef,
And the cider and the cream so white;
O! they are the making of the jolly Devon lads,
For to play, and eke to fight."

"Come," said Oxenham, "come along! Who lists? who lists? who'll make his fortune?

"Oh, who will join, jolly mariners all?
And who will join, says he, O!
To fill his pockets with the good red goold,
By sailing on the sea, O!"

"Who'll list?" cried the gaunt man again; "now's your time! We've got forty men to Plymouth now, ready to sail the minute we get back, and we want a dozen out of you Bideford men, and just a boy or two, and then we'm off and away, and make our fortunes, or go to heaven.

"Our bodies in the sea so deep,
Our souls in heaven to rest!
Where valiant seamen, one and all,
Hereafter shall be blest!"

"Now," said Oxenham, "you won't let the Plymouth men say that the Bideford men daren't follow them? North Devon against South, it is. Who'll join? who'll join? It is but a step of a way, after all, and sailing as smooth as a duck-pond as soon as you're past Cape Finisterre. I'll run a Clovelly herring-boat there and back for a wager of twenty pound, and never ship a bucketful all the way. Who'll join? Don't think you're buying a pig in a poke. I know the road, and Salvation Yeo, here, too, who was the

gunner's mate, as well as I do the narrow seas, and better. You ask him to show you the chart of it, now, and see if he don't tell you over the ruttier as well as Drake himself."

On which the gaunt man pulled from under his arm a great white buffalo horn covered with rough etchings of land and sea, and held it up to the admiring ring.

"See here, boys all, and behold the pictur of the place, dra'ed out so natural as ever was life. I got mun from a Portingal, down to the Azores; and he'd pricked mun out, and pricked mun out, wheresoever he'd sailed, and whatsoever he'd seen. Take mun in your hands now, Simon Evans, take mun in your hands; look mun over, and I'll warrant you'll know the way in five minutes so well as ever a shark in the seas."

And the horn was passed from hand to hand; while Oxenham, who saw that his hearers were becoming moved, called through the open window for a great tankard of sack, and passed that from hand to hand, after the horn.

The school-boy, who had been devouring with eyes and ears all which passed, and had contrived by this time to edge himself into the inner ring, now stood face to face with the hero of the emerald crest, and got as many peeps as he could at the wonder. But when he saw the sailors, one after another, having turned it over a while, come forward and offer to join Mr. Oxenham, his soul burned within him for a nearer view of that wondrous horn, as magical in its effects

as that of Tristrem, or the enchanter's in Ariosto; and when the group had somewhat broken up, and Oxenham was going into the tavern with his recruits, he asked boldly for a nearer sight of the marvel, which was granted at once.

And now to his astonished gaze displayed themselves cities and harbours, dragons and elephants, whales which fought with sharks, plate ships of Spain, islands with apes and palm-trees, each with its name over-written, and here and there, "Here is gold;" and again, "Much gold and silver;" inserted most probably, as the words were in English, by the hands of Mr. Oxenham himself. Lingeringly and longingly the boy turned it round and round, and thought the owner of it more fortunate than Khan or Kaiser. Oh, if he could but possess that horn, what needed he on earth beside to make him blest!

"I say, will you sell this?"

"Yea, marry, or my own soul, if I can get the worth of it."

"I want the horn,—I don't want your soul; it's somewhat of a stale sole, for aught I know; and there are plenty of fresh ones in the bay."

And therewith, after much fumbling, he pulled out a tester (the only one he had), and asked if that would buy it?

"That! no, nor twenty of them."

The boy thought over what a good knight-errant would do in such case, and then answered, "Tell you what: I'll fight you for it."

"Thank'ee, sir!"

"Break the jacknapes's head for him, Yeo," said Oxenham.

"Call me jackanapes again, and I break yours, sir." And the boy lifted his fist fiercely.

Oxenham looked at him a minute smilingly. "Tut! tut! my man, hit one of your own size, if you will, and spare little folk like me!"

"If I have a boy's age, sir, I have a man's fist. I shall be fifteen years old this month, and know how to answer any one who insults me."

"Fifteen, my young cockerel? you look liker twenty," said Oxenham, with an admiring glance at the lad's broad limbs, keen blue eyes, curling golden locks, and round honest face. "Fifteen? If I had half-a-dozen such lads as you, I would make knights of them before I died. Eh, Yeo?"

"He'll do," said Yeo; "he will make a brave gamecock in a year or two, if he dares ruffle up so early at a tough old hen-master like the Captain."

At which there was a general laugh, in which Oxenham joined as loudly as any, and then bade the lad tell him why he was so keen after the horn.

"Because," said he, looking up boldly, "I want to go to sea. I want to see the Indies. I want to fight the Spaniards. Though I am a gentleman's son, I'd a deal liever be a cabin-boy on board your ship." And the lad having hurried out his say fiercely enough, dropped his head again.

"And you shall," cried Oxenham, with a great oath; "and take a galleon, and dine off carbonadoed Dons. Whose son are you, my gallant fellow?"

"Mr. Leigh's, of Burrough Court."

"Bless his soul! I know him as well as I do the Eddystone, and his kitchen too. Who sups with him to-night?"

"Sir Richard Grenvil."

"Dick Grenvil? I did not know he was in town. Go home and tell your father John Oxenham will come and keep him company. There, off with you! I'll make all straight with the good gentleman, and you shall have your venture with me; and as for the horn, let him have the horn, Yeo, and I'll give you a noble for it."

"Not a penny, noble Captain. If young master will take a poor mariner's gift, there it is, for the sake of his love to the calling, and Heaven send him luck therein." And the good fellow, with the impulsive generosity of a true sailor, thrust the horn into the boy's hands, and walked away to escape thanks.

"And now," quoth Oxenham, "my merry men all, make up your minds what mannered men you be minded to be before you take your bounties. I want none of your rascally lurching longshore vermin, who get five pounds out of this captain, and ten out of that, and let him sail without them after all, while they are stowed away under women's mufflers, and in tavern cellars. If any man is of that humour, he had better to cut himself up, and salt himself down in a barrel for pork, before he meets me again; for by this light, let me catch him, be it seven years hence, and if I do not cut his throat upon the streets, it's a pity! But if any man will be true brother to me, true brother to

him I'll be, come wreck or prize, storm or calm, salt water or fresh, victuals or none, share and fare alike; and here's my hand upon it, for every man and all; and so—

"Westward ho! with a rumbelow,
And hurra for the Spanish main, O!"

After which oration Mr. Oxenham swaggered into the tavern, followed by his new men; and the boy took his way homewards, nursing his precious horn, trembling between hope and fear, and blushing with maidenly shame, and a half-sense of wrong-doing at having revealed suddenly to a stranger the darling wish which he had hidden from his father and mother ever since he was ten years old.

Now this young gentleman, Amyas Leigh, though come of as good blood as any in Devon, and having lived all his life in what we should even now call the very best society, and being (on account of the valour, courtesy, and truly noble qualities which he showed forth in his most eventful life) chosen by me as the hero and centre of this story, was not, saving for his good looks, by any means what would be called now-a-days an "interesting" youth, still less a "highly educated" one; for, with the exception of a little Latin, which had been driven into him by repeated blows, as if it had been a nail, he knew no books whatsoever, save his Bible, his Prayer-book, the old "Mort d'Arthur" of Caxton's edition, which lay in the great bay window in the hall, and the translation of "Las Casas' History of the West Indies," which lay beside it, lately done into English under the title of

"The Cruelties of the Spaniards." He devoutly believed in fairies, whom he called pixies; and held that they changed babies, and made the mushroom rings on the downs to dance in. When he had warts or burns, he went to the white witch at Northam to charm them away; he thought that the sun moved round the earth, and that the moon had some kindred with a Cheshire cheese. He held that the swallows slept all the winter at the bottom of the horse-pond; talked, like Raleigh, Grenvil, and other low persons, with a broad Devonshire accent; and was in many other respects so very ignorant a youth, that any pert monitor in a national school might have had a hearty laugh at him. Nevertheless, this ignorant young savage, "vacant of the glorious gains" of the nineteenth century, children's literature and science made easy, and, worst of all, of those improved views of English history now current among our railway essayists, which consist in believing all persons, male and female, before the year 1688, and nearly all after it, to have been either hypocrites or fools, had learnt certain things which he would hardly have been taught just now in any school in England; for his training had been that of the old Persians, "to speak the truth and to draw the bow," both of which savage virtues he had acquired to perfection, as well as the equally savage ones of enduring pain cheerfully, and of believing it to be the finest thing in the world to be a gentleman; by which word he had been taught to understand the careful habit of causing needless pain to no human being, poor or rich, and of taking pride

in giving up his own pleasure for the sake of those who were weaker than himself. Moreover, having been entrusted for the last year with the breaking of a colt, and the care of a cast of young hawks which his father had received from Lundy Isle, he had been profiting much by the means of those coarse and frivolous amusements, in perseverance, thoughtfulness, and the habit of keeping his temper; and though he had never had a single "object lesson," or been taught to "use his intellectual powers," he knew the names and ways of every bird, and fish, and fly, and could read, as cunningly as the oldest sailor, the meaning of every drift of cloud which crossed the heavens. Lastly, he had been for some time past, on account of his extraordinary size and strength, undisputed cock of the school, and the most terrible fighter among all Bideford boys; in which brutal habit he took much delight, and contrived, strange as it may seem, to extract from it good, not only for himself but for others, doing justice among his school-fellows with a heavy hand, and succouring the oppressed and afflicted; so that he was the terror of all the sailor-lads, and the pride and stay of all the town's-boys and girls, and hardly considered that he had done his duty in his calling if he went home without beating a big lad for bullying a little one. For the rest, he never thought about thinking, or felt about feeling; and had no ambition whatsoever beyond pleasing his father and mother, getting by honest means the maximum of "red quarrenders" and mazard cherries, and going to sea when he was big enough. Neither was he what

would be now-a-days called by many a pious child; for though he said his Creed and Lord's Prayer night and morning, and went to the service at the church every forenoon, and read the day's Psalms with his mother every evening, and had learnt from her and from his father (as he proved well in after life), that it was infinitely noble to do right and infinitely base to do wrong, yet (the age of children's religious books not having yet dawned on the world), he knew nothing more of theology, or of his own soul, than is contained in the Church Catechism. It is a question, however, on the whole, whether, though grossly ignorant (according to our modern notions) in science and religion, he was altogether untrained in manhood, virtue, and godliness; and whether the barbaric narrowness of his Information was not somewhat counterbalanced both in him and in the rest of his generation by the depth, and breadth, and healthiness of his Education.

So let us watch him up the hill as he goes hugging his horn, to tell all that has passed to his mother, from whom he had never hidden anything in his life, save only that sea-fever; and that only because he foreknew that it would give her pain; and because, moreover, being a prudent and sensible lad, he knew that he was not yet old enough to go, and that, as he expressed it to her that afternoon, "there was no use hollaing till he was out of the wood."

So he goes up between the rich lane-banks, heavy with drooping ferns and honeysuckle; out upon the windy down toward the old Court, nestled amid its ring of wind-clipt oaks; through the grey gateway

into the homeclose; and then he pauses a moment to look around; first at the wide bay to the westward, with its southern wall of purple cliffs; then at the dim Isle of Lundy far away at sea; then at the cliffs and downs of Morte and Braunton, right in front of him; then at the vast yellow sheet of rolling sandhill, and green alluvial plain dotted with red cattle, at his feet, through which the silver estuary winds onward toward the sea. Beneath him, on his right, the Torridge, like a land-locked lake, sleeps broad and bright between the old park of Tapeley and the charmed rock of the Hubbastone, where, seven hundred years ago, the Norse rovers landed to lay siege to Kenwith Castle, a mile away on his left hand; and not three fields away, are the old stones of "The Bloody Corner," where the retreating Danes, cut off from their ships, made their last fruitless stand against the Saxon sheriff and the valiant men of Devon. Within that charmed rock, so Torridge boatmen tell, sleeps now the old Norse Viking in his leaden coffin, with all his fairy treasure and his crown of gold; and as the boy looks at the spot, he fancies, and almost hopes, that the day may come when he shall have to do his duty against the invader as boldly as the men of Devon did then. And past him, far below, upon the soft south-eastern breeze, the stately ships go sliding out to sea. When shall he sail in them, and see the wonders of the deep? And as he stands there with beating heart and kindling eye, the cool breeze whistling through his long fair curls, he is a symbol, though he knows it not, of brave young England longing to wing its

way out of its island prison, to discover and to traffic, to colonise and to civilise, until no wind can sweep the earth which does not bear the echoes of an English voice. Patience, young Amyas! Thou too shalt forth, and westward ho, beyond thy wildest dreams; and see brave sights, and do brave deeds, which no man has since the foundation of the world. Thou, too, shalt face invaders stronger and more cruel far than Dane or Norman, and bear thy part in that great Titan strife before the renown of which the name of Salamis shall fade away!

Mr. Oxenham came that evening to supper as he had promised: but as people supped in those days in much the same manner as they do now, we may drop the thread of the story for a few hours, and take it up again after supper is over.

"Come now, Dick Grenvil, do thou talk the good man round, and I'll warrant myself to talk round the good wife."

The personage whom Oxenham addressed thus familiarly, answered by a somewhat sarcastic smile, and, "Mr. Oxenham gives Dick Grenvil" (with just enough emphasis on the "Mr." and the "Dick," to hint that a liberty had been taken with him) "overmuch credit with the men. Mr. Oxenham's credit with fair ladies, none can doubt. Friend Leigh, is Heard's great ship home yet from the Straits?"

The speaker, known well in those days as Sir Richard Grenvile, Granville, Greenvil, Greenfield, with two or three other variations, was one of those truly heroical personages whom Providence, fitting

always the men to their age and their work, had sent upon the earth whereof it takes right good care, not in England only, but in Spain and Italy, in Germany and the Netherlands, and wherever, in short, great men and great deeds were needed to lift the mediæval world into the modern.

And, among all the heroic faces which the painters of that age have preserved, none, perhaps, hardly excepting Shakspeare's or Spenser's, Alva's or Parma's, is more heroic than that of Richard Grenvil, as it stands in Prince's "Worthies of Devon;" of a Spanish type, perhaps (or more truly speaking, a Cornish), rather than an English, with just enough of the British element in it, to give delicacy to its massiveness. The forehead and whole brain are of extraordinary loftiness, and perfectly upright; the nose long, aquiline, and delicately pointed; the mouth fringed with a short silky beard, small and ripe, yet firm as granite, with just pout enough of the lower lip to give hint of that capacity of noble indignation which lay hid under its usual courtly calm and sweetness; if there be a defect in the face, it is that the eyes are somewhat small, and close together, and the eyebrows, though delicately arched, and, without a trace of peevishness, too closely pressed down upon them, the complexion is dark, the figure tall and graceful; altogether the likeness of a wise and gallant gentleman, lovely to all good men, awful to all bad men; in whose presence none dare say or do a mean or a ribald thing; whom brave men left, feeling themselves nerved to do their duty better, while cowards slipped away, as bats and owls before

the sun. So he lived and moved, whether in the court of Elizabeth, giving his counsel among the wisest; or in the streets of Bideford, capped alike by squire and merchant, shopkeeper and sailor; or riding along the moorland roads between his houses of Stow and Bideford, while every woman ran out to her door to look at the great Sir Richard, the pride of North Devon; or, sitting there in the low mullioned window at Burrough, with his cup of malmsey before him, and the lute to which he had just been singing laid across his knees, while the red western sun streamed in upon his high, bland forehead, and soft curling locks; ever the same steadfast, God-fearing, chivalrous man, conscious (as far as a soul so healthy could be conscious) of the pride of beauty, and strength, and valour, and wisdom, and a race and name which claimed direct descent from the grandfather of the Conqueror, and was tracked down the centuries by valiant deeds and noble benefits to his native shire, himself the noblest of his race. Men said that he was proud: but he could not look round him without having something to be proud of; that he was stern and harsh to his sailors: but it was only when he saw in them any taint of cowardice or falsehood; that he was subject, at moments, to such fearful fits of rage, that he had been seen to snatch the glasses from the table, grind them to pieces in his teeth, and swallow them: but that was only when his indignation had been aroused by some tale of cruelty or oppression; and, above all, by those West Indian devilries of the Spaniards, whom he regarded (and in those days rightly enough) as the

enemies of God and man. Of this last fact Oxenham was well aware, and therefore felt somewhat puzzled and nettled, when, after having asked Mr. Leigh's leave to take young Amyas with him, and set forth in glowing colours the purpose of his voyage, he found Sir Richard utterly unwilling to help him with his suit.

"Heyday, Sir Richard? You are not surely gone over to the side of those canting fellows (Spanish Jesuits in disguise every one of them, they are), who pretend to turn up their noses at Franky Drake as a pirate, and be hanged to them?"

"My friend Oxenham," answered he, in the sententious and measured style of the day, "I have always held, as you should know by this, that Mr. Drake's booty, as well as my good friend Captain Hawkins's, is lawful prize, as being taken from the Spaniard, who is not only 'hostis humani generis,' but has no right to the same, having robbed it violently, by torture and extreme iniquity, from the poor Indian, whom God avenge, as He surely will."

"Amen," said Mrs. Leigh.

"I say Amen too," quoth Oxenham, "especially if it please Him to avenge them by English hands."

"And I also," went on Sir Richard; "for the rightful owners of the said goods being either miserably dead, or incapable by reason of their servitude of ever recovering any share thereof, the treasure, falsely called Spanish, cannot be better bestowed than in building up the state of England against them, our natural enemies; and thereby, in building up the weal of the

Reformed Churches throughout the world, and the liberties of all nations, against a tyranny more foul and rapacious than that of Nero or Caligula; which if it be not the cause of God, I, for one, know not what God's cause is!" And as he warmed in his speech, his eyes flashed very fire.

"Hark now!" said Oxenham, "who can speak more boldly than he? and yet he will not help this lad to so noble an adventure."

"You have asked his father and mother; what is their answer?"

"Mine is this," said Mr. Leigh; "if it be God's will that my boy should become hereafter such a mariner as Sir Richard Grenvil, let him go, and God be with him; but let him first bide here at home and be trained, if God give me grace, to become such a gentleman as Sir Richard Grenvil."

Sir Richard bowed low, and Mrs. Leigh catching up the last word—

"There, Mr. Oxenham, you cannot gainsay that, unless you will be discourteous to his worship. And for me—though it be a weak woman's reason, yet it is a mother's: he is my only child. His elder brother is far away. God only knows whether I shall see him again; and what are all reports of his virtues and his learning to me, compared to that sweet presence which I daily miss? Ah! Mr. Oxenham, my beautiful Joseph is gone; and though he be lord of Pharaoh's household, yet he is far away in Egypt; and you will take Benjamin also! Ah! Mr. Oxenham, you have no child, or you would not ask for mine!"

"And how do you know that, my sweet Madam?" said the adventurer, turning first deadly pale, and then glowing red. Her last words had touched him to the quick in some unexpected place; and rising, he courteously laid her hand to his lips, and said—"I say no more. Farewell, sweet Madam, and God send all men such wives as you."

"And all wives," said she, smiling, "such husbands as mine."

"Nay, I will not say that," answered he, with a half sneer—and then, "Farewell, friend Leigh, Farewell, gallant Dick Grenvil. God send I see thee Lord High Admiral when I come home. And yet, why should I come home? Will you pray for poor Jack, gentles?"

"Tut, tut, man! good words," said Leigh; "let us drink to our merry meeting before you go." And rising, and putting the tankard of malmsey to his lips, he passed it to Sir Richard, who rose, and saying, "To the fortune of a bold mariner and a gallant gentleman," drank, and put the cup into Oxenham's hand.

The adventurer's face was flushed, and his eye wild. Whether from the liquor he had drunk during the day, or whether from Mrs. Leigh's last speech, he had not been himself for a few minutes. He lifted the cup, and was in act to pledge them, when he suddenly dropped it on the table, and pointed, staring and trembling, up and down, and round the room, as if following some fluttering object.

"There! Do you see it? The bird!—the bird with the white breast!"

Each looked at the other; but Leigh, who was a quick-witted man, and an old courtier, forced a laugh instantly, and cried—

"Nonsense, brave Jack Oxenham! Leave white birds for men who will show the white feather. Mrs. Leigh waits to pledge you."

Oxenham recovered himself in a moment, pledged them all round, drinking deep and fiercely; and after hearty farewells, departed, never hinting again at his strange exclamation.

After he was gone, and while Leigh was attending him to the door, Mrs. Leigh and Grenvil kept a few minutes' dead silence. At last—

"God help him!" said she.

"Amen," said Grenvil, "for he never needed it more. But, indeed, Madam, I put no faith in such omens."

"But, Sir Richard, that bird has been seen for generations before the death of any of his family. I know those who were at South Tawton when his mother died, and his brother also; and they both saw it. God help him! for, after all, he is a proper man."

"So many a lady has thought before now, Mrs. Leigh, and well for him if they had not. But, indeed, I make no account of omens. When God is ready for each man, then he must go; and when can he go better?"

"But," said Mr. Leigh, who entered, "I have seen, and especially when I was in Italy, omens and prophecies before now beget their own fulfilment, by driving men into recklessness, and making them run

headlong upon that very ruin which, as they fancied, was running upon them."

"And which," said Sir Richard, "they might have avoided, if, instead of trusting in I know not what dumb and dark destiny, they had trusted in the living God, by faith in whom men may remove mountains, and quench the fire, and put to flight the armies of the alien. I, too, know, and know not how I know, that I shall never die in my bed."

"God forfend!" cried Mrs. Leigh.

"And why, fair Madam, if I die doing my duty to my God and my queen? The thought never moves me: nay, to tell the truth, I pray often enough that I may be spared the miseries of imbecile old age, and that end which the old Northmen rightly called 'a cow's death' rather than a man's. But enough of this. Mr. Leigh, you have done wisely to-night. Poor Oxenham does not go on his voyage with a single eye. I have talked about him with Drake and Hawkins; and I guess why Mrs. Leigh touched him so home when she told him that he had no child."

"Has he one, then, in the West Indies?" cried the good lady.

"God knows; and God grant we may not hear of shame and sorrow fallen upon an ancient and honourable house of Devon. My brother Stukely is woe enough to North Devon for this generation."

"Poor braggadocio!" said Mr. Leigh; "and yet not altogether that too, for he can fight at least."

"So can every mastiff and boar, much more an Englishman. And now come hither to me, my ad-

venturous godson, and don't look in such doleful dumps. I hear you have broken all the sailor boys' heads already."

"Nearly all," said young Amyas, with due modesty. "But am I not to go to sea?"

"All things in their time, my boy, and God forbid that either I or your worthy parents should keep you from that noble calling which is the safeguard of this England and her queen. But you do not wish to live and die the master of a trawler?"

"I should like to be a brave adventurer, like Mr. Oxenham."

"God grant you become a braver man than he! for as I think, to be bold against the enemy is common to the brutes; but the prerogative of a man is to be bold against himself."

"How, sir?"

"To conquer our own fancies, Amyas, and our own lusts, and our ambition, in the sacred name of duty; this it is to be truly brave, and truly strong; for he who cannot rule himself, how can he rule his crew or his fortunes? Come, now, I will make you a promise. If you will bide quietly at home, and learn from your father and mother all which befits a gentleman and a Christian, as well as a seaman, the day shall come when you shall sail with Richard Grenvil himself, or with better men than he, on a nobler errand than gold-hunting on the Spanish Main."

"O my boy, my boy!" said Mrs. Leigh, "hear what the good Sir Richard promises you. Many an earl's son would be glad to be in your place."

"And many an earl's son will be glad to be in his place a score years hence, if he will but learn what I know you two can teach him. And now, Amyas, my lad, I will tell you for a warning the history of that Sir Thomas Stukely of whom I spoke just now, and who was, as all men know, a gallant and courtly knight, of an ancient and worshipful family in Ilfracombe, well practised in the wars, and well beloved at first by our incomparable queen, the friend of all true virtue, as I trust she will be of yours some day; who wanted but one step to greatness, and that was this, that, in his hurry to rule all the world, he forgot to rule himself. And first, he wasted his estate in show and luxury, always intending to be famous, and destroying his own fame all the while by his vainglory and haste. Then, to retrieve his losses, he hit upon the peopling of Florida, which thou and I will see done some day, by God's blessing; for I and some good friends of mine have an errand there as well as he. But he did not go about it as a loyal man, to advance the honour of his queen, but his own honour only, dreaming that he, too, should be a king; and was not ashamed to tell her majesty, that he had rather be sovereign of a molehill than the highest subject of an emperor."

"They say," said Mr. Leigh, "that he told her plainly he should be a prince before he died, and that she gave him one of her pretty quips in return."

"I don't know that her majesty had the best of it. A fool is many times too strong for a wise man, by virtue of his thick hide. For when she said that she

hoped she should hear from him in his new principality, 'Yes, sooth,' says he, graciously enough. 'And in what style?' asks she. 'To our dear sister,' says Stukely: to which her clemency had nothing to reply, but turned away, as Mr. Burleigh told me, laughing."

"Alas for him!" said gentle Mrs. Leigh. "Such self-conceit—and Heaven knows we have the root of it in ourselves also—is the very daughter of self-will, and of that loud crying out about I, and me, and mine, which is the very bird-call for all devils, and the broad road which leads to death."

"It will lead him to his," said Sir Richard; "God grant it be not upon Tower-hill! for since that Florida plot, and after that his hopes of Irish preferment came to nought, he who could not help himself by fair means has taken to foul ones, and gone over to Italy to the Pope, whose infallibility has not been proof against Stukely's wit; for he was soon his Holiness's closet counsellor, and, they say, his bosom friend; and made him give credit to his boasts that, with three thousand soldiers he would beat the English out of Ireland, and make the Pope's son king of it."

"Ay, but," said Mr. Leigh, "I suppose the Italians have the same fetch now as they had when I was there, to explain such ugly cases; namely, that the Pope is infallible only in doctrine, and quoad Pope; while quoad hominem, he is even as others, or indeed, in general, a deal worse, so that the office, and not the man, may be glorified thereby. But where is Stukely now?"

"At Rome when last I heard of him, ruffling it up

and down the Vatican as Baron Ross, Viscount Murrough, Earl Wexford, Marquis Leinster, and a title or two more, which have cost the Pope little, seeing that they never were his to give; and plotting, they say, some hair-brained expedition against Ireland by the help of the Spanish king, which must end in nothing but his shame and ruin. And now, my sweet hosts, I must call for serving-boy and lantern, and home to my bed in Bideford."

And so Amyas Leigh went back to school, and Mr. Oxenham went his way to Plymouth again, and sailed for the Spanish Main.

CHAPTER II.

HOW AMYAS CAME HOME THE FIRST TIME.

"Si taceant homines, facient te sidera notum,
Sol nescit comitis immemor esse sui."

Old Epigram on Drake.

FIVE years are past and gone. It is nine of the clock on a still, bright November morning; but the bells of Bideford church are still ringing for the daily service two hours after the usual time; and instead of going soberly according to wont, cannot help breaking forth every five minutes into a jocund peal, and tumbling head over heels in ecstasies of joy. Bideford streets are a very flower garden of all the colours, swarming with seamen and burghers, and burghers' wives and daughters, all in their holiday attire. Garlands are hung across the streets, and tapestries from every window. The ships in the pool are dressed in all their flags, and give tumultuous vent to their feelings by peals of ordnance of every size. Every stable is crammed with horses; and Sir Richard Grenvil's house is like a very tavern, with eating and drinking, and unsaddling, and running to and fro of grooms and serving-men. Along the little churchyard, packed full with women, streams all the gentle blood of North Devon,—tall and stately men, and fair ladies, worthy

of the days when the gentry of England were by due right the leaders of the people, by personal prowess and beauty, as well as by intellect and education. And first, there is my lady Countess of Bath, whom Sir Richard Grenvil is escorting, cap in hand (for her good Earl Bourchier is in London with the queen); and there are Bassets from beautiful Umberleigh, and Carys from more beautiful Clovelly, and Fortescues of Wear, and Fortescues of Buckland, and Fortescues from all quarters, and Coles from Slade, and Stukelys from Affton, and St. Legers from Annery, and Coffins from Portledge, and even Coplestones from Eggesford, thirty miles away: and last, but not least (for almost all stop to give them place), Sir John Chichester of Ralegh, followed in single file, after the good old patriarchial fashion, by his eight daughters, and three of his five famous sons (one, to avenge his murdered brother, is fighting valiantly in Ireland, hereafter to rule there wisely also, as Lord-Deputy and Baron of Belfast); and he meets at the gate his cousin of Arlington, and behind him a train of four daughters and nineteen sons, the last of whom has not yet passed the Town-hall, while the first is at the Lychgate, who, laughing, make way for the elder though shorter branch of that most fruitful tree; and so on into the church, where all are placed according to their degrees, or at least as near as may be, not without a few sour looks, and shovings, and whisperings, from one high-born matron and another; till the churchwardens and sidesmen, who never had before so goodly a company to arrange, have bustled themselves hot and red, and

frantic, and end by imploring abjectly the help of the great Sir Richard himself to tell them who everybody is, and which is the elder branch, and which is the younger, and who carries eight quarterings in their arms, and who only four, and so prevent their setting at deadly feud half the fine ladies of North Devon; for the old men are all safe packed away in the corporation pews, and the young ones care only to get a place whence they may eye the ladies. And at last there is a silence, and a looking toward the door, and then distant music, flutes and hautboys, drums and trumpets, which come braying, and screaming, and thundering merrily up to the very church doors, and then cease; and the churchwardens and sidesmen bustle down to the entrance, rods in hand, and there is a general whisper and rustle, not without glad tears and blessings from many a woman, and from some men also, as the wonder of the day enters, and the rector begins, not the morning service, but the good old thanksgiving after a victory at sea.

And what is it which has thus sent old Bideford wild with that "godly joy and pious mirth," of which we now only retain traditions in our translation of the psalms? Why are all eyes fixed, with greedy admiration, on those four weather-beaten mariners, decked out with knots and ribbons by loving hands; and yet more on that gigantic figure who walks before them, a beardless boy, and yet with the frame and stature of a Hercules, towering, like Saul of old, a head and shoulders above all the congregation, with his golden locks flowing down over his shoulders?

And why, as the five go instinctively up to the altar, and there fall on their knees before the rails, are all eyes turned to the pew, where Mrs. Leigh of Burrough has hid her face between her hands, and her hood rustles and shakes to her joyful sobs? Because there was fellow-feeling of old in merry England, in county and in town; and these are Devon men, and men of Bideford, whose names are Amyas Leigh of Burrough, John Staveley, Michael Heard, and Jonas Marshall of Bideford, and Thomas Braund of Clovelly: and they, the first of all English mariners, have sailed round the world with Francis Drake, and are come hither to give God thanks.

It is a long story. To explain how it happened we must go back for a page or two, almost to the point from whence we started in the last Chapter.

For somewhat more than a twelvemonth after Mr. Oxenham's departure, young Amyas had gone on quietly enough, according to promise, with the exception of certain occasional outbursts of fierceness common to all young male animals, and especially to boys of any strength of character. His scholarship, indeed, progressed no better than before; but his home education went on healthily enough; and he was fast becoming, young as he was, a right good archer, and rider, and swordsman (after the old school of buckler practice) when, his father, having gone down on business to the Exeter Assizes, caught (as was too common in those days) the gaol-fever from the prisoners; sickened in the very court; and died within a week.

And now Mrs. Leigh was left to God and her own soul, with this young lion-cub in leash, to tame and train for this life and the life to come. She had loved her husband fervently and holily. He had been often peevish, often melancholy; for he was a disappointed man, with an estate impoverished by his father's folly, and his own youthful ambition, which had led him up to Court, and made him waste his heart and his purse in following a vain shadow. He was one of those men, moreover, who possess almost every gift except the gift of the power to use them; and though a scholar, a courtier, and a soldier, he had found himself, when he was past forty, without settled employment or aim in life, by reason of a certain shyness, pride, or delicate honour (call it which you will), which had always kept him from playing a winning game in that very world after whose prizes he hankered to the last, and on which he revenged himself by continual grumbling. At last, by his good luck, he met with a fair young Miss Foljambe, of Derbyshire, then about Queen Elizabeth's court, who was as tired as he of the sins of the world, though she had seen less of them; and the two contrived to please each other so well, that though the queen grumbled a little, as usual, at the lady for marrying, and at the gentleman for adoring any one but her royal self, they got leave to vanish from the little Babylon at Whitehall, and settle in peace at Burrough. In her he found a treasure, and he knew what he had found.

Mrs. Leigh was, and had been from her youth, one of those noble old English churchwomen, without

superstition, and without severity, who are among the fairest features of that heroic time. There was a certain melancholy about her, nevertheless; for the recollections of her childhood carried her back to times when it was an awful thing to be a Protestant. She could remember among them, five-and-twenty years ago, the burning of poor blind Joan Waste, at Derby, and of Mistress Joyce Lewis, too, like herself, a lady born; and sometimes even now, in her nightly dreams, rang in her ears her mother's bitter cries to God, either to spare her that fiery torment, or to give her strength to bear it, as she whom she loved had borne it before her. For her mother, who was of a good family in Yorkshire, had been one of Queen Catherine's bed-chamber women, and the bosom friend and disciple of Anne Askew. And she had sat in Smithfield, with blood curdled by horror, to see the hapless court beauty, a month before the paragon of Henry's court, carried in a chair (so crippled was she by the rack) to her fiery doom at the stake, beside her fellow-courtier, Mr. Lascelles, while the very heavens seemed to the shuddering mob around to speak their wrath and grief in solemn thunder peals, and heavy drops which hissed upon the crackling pile.

Therefore a sadness hung upon her all her life, and deepened in the days of Queen Mary, when, as a notorious Protestant and heretic she had had to hide for her life among the hills and caverns of the Peak, and was only saved by the love which her husband's tenants bore her, and by his bold declaration that, good Catholic as he was, he would run through the

body any constable, justice, or priest, yea, bishop or cardinal, who dared to serve the Queen's warrant upon his wife.

So she escaped: but, as I said, a sadness hung upon her all her life; and the skirt of that dark mantle fell upon the young girl who had been the partner of her wanderings and hidings among the lonely hills; and who, after she was married, gave herself utterly up to God.

And yet in giving herself to God, Mrs. Leigh gave herself to her husband, her children, and the poor of Northam town, and was none the less welcome to the Grenviles, and Fortescues, and Chichesters, and all the gentle families round, who honoured her husband's talents, and enjoyed his wit. She accustomed herself to austerities, which often called forth the kindly rebukes of her husband; and yet she did so without one superstitious thought of appeasing the fancied wrath of God, or of giving him pleasure (base thought) by any pain of hers; for her spirit had been trained in the freest and loftiest doctrines of Luther's school; and that little mystic "Alt-Deutsch Theologie" (to which the great Reformer said that he owed more than to any book, save the Bible, and St. Augustine) was her counsellor and comforter by day and night.

And now, at little past forty, she was left a widow; lovely still in face and figure; and still more lovely from the divine calm which brooded, like the dove of peace and the Holy Spirit of God (which indeed it was), over every look, and word, and gesture; a sweetness which had been ripened by storm, as well

as by sunshine; which this world had not given, and could not take away. No wonder that Sir Richard and Lady Grenvile loved her; no wonder that her children worshipped her; no wonder that the young Amyas, when the first burst of grief was over, and he knew again where he stood, felt that a new life had begun for him; that his mother was no more to think and act for him only, but that he must think and act for his mother. And so it was, that on the very day after his father's funeral, when school-hours were over, instead of coming straight home, he walked boldly into Sir Richard Grenvile's house, and asked to see his godfather.

"You must be my father now, sir," said he firmly.

And Sir Richard looked at the boy's broad strong face, and swore a great and holy oath, like Glasgerion's, "by oak, and ash, and thorn," that he would be a father to him, and a brother to his mother, for Christ's sake. And Lady Grenvile took the boy by the hand, and walked home with him to Burrough; and there the two fair women fell on each other's necks, and wept together; the one for the loss which had been, the other, as by a prophetic instinct, for the like loss which was to come to her also. For the sweet St. Leger knew well that her husband's fiery spirit would never leave his body on a peaceful bed; but that death (as he prayed almost nightly that it might) would find him sword in hand, upon the field of duty and of fame. And there those two vowed everlasting sisterhood, and kept their vow; and after that all things went on at Burrough as before; and Amyas rode, and

shot, and boxed, and wandered on the quay at Sir Richard's side; for Mrs. Leigh was too wise a woman to alter one tittle of the training which her husband had thought best for his younger boy. It was enough that her elder son had of his own accord taken to that form of life in which she in her secret heart would fain have moulded both her children. For Frank, God's wedding gift to that pure love of hers, had won himself honour at home and abroad; first at the school at Bideford; then at Exeter College, where he had become a friend of Sir Philip Sidney's, and many another young man of rank and promise; and next, in the summer of 1572, on his way to the University of Heidelberg, he had gone to Paris, with (luckily for him) letters of recommendation to Walsingham, at the English Embassy: by which letters he not only fell in a second time with Philip Sidney, but saved his own life (as Sidney did his) in the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew's Day. At Heidelberg he had stayed two years, winning fresh honour from all who knew him, and resisting all Sidney's entreaties to follow him into Italy. For, scorning to be a burden to his parents, he had become at Heidelberg tutor to two young German princes, whom, after living with them at their father's house for a year or more, he at last, to his own great delight, took with him down to Padua, "to perfect them," as he wrote home, "according to his insufficiency, in all princely studies." Sidney was now returned to England; but Frank found friends enough without him, such letters of recommendation and diplomas did he carry from I know not how many

princes, magnificoes, and learned doctors, who had fallen in love with the learning, modesty, and virtue, of the fair young Englishman. And ere Frank returned to Germany, he had satiated his soul with all the wonders of that wondrous land. He had talked over the art of sonnetering with Tasso, the art of history with Sarpi; he had listened between awe and incredulity to the daring theories of Galileo; he had taken his pupils to Venice, that their portraits might be painted by Paulo Veronese; he had seen the palaces of Palladio, and the Merchant Princes on the Rialto, and the Argosies of Ragusa, and all the wonders of that meeting-point of east and west; he had watched Tintoretto's mighty hand "hurling tempestuous glories o'er the scene;" and even, by dint of private intercession in high places, had been admitted to that sacred room, where, with long silver beard and undimmed eye, amid a pantheon of his own creations, the ancient Titian, patriarch of art, still lingered upon earth, and told old tales of the Bellinis, and Raffaelle, and Michael Angelo, and the building of St. Peter's, and the fire at Venice, and the Sack of Rome, and of kings and warriors, statesmen and poets, long since gone to their account, and showed the sacred brush which Francis the First had stooped to pick up for him. And (licence forbidden to Sidney by his friend Languet) he had been to Rome, and seen (much to the scandal of good Protestants at home) that "right good fellow," as Sidney calls him, who had not yet eaten himself to death, the Pope for the time being. And he had seen the frescoes of the Vatican, and heard Palestrina

preside as chapel-master over the performance of his own music beneath the dome of St. Peter's, and fallen half in love with those luscious strains, till he was awakened from his dream by the recollection that beneath that same dome had gone up thanksgivings to the God of heaven, for those blood-stained streets, and shrieking women, and heaps of insulted corpses, which he had beheld in Paris on the night of St. Bartholomew. At last, a few months before his father died, he had taken back his pupils to their home in Germany, from whence he was dismissed, as he wrote, with rich gifts; and then Mrs. Leigh's heart beat high, at the thought that the wanderer would return: but, alas! within a month after his father's death, came a long letter from Frank, describing the Alps, and the valleys of the Waldenses (with whose Barbes he had had much talk about the late horrible persecutions), and setting forth how at Padua he had made the acquaintance of that illustrious scholar and light of the age, Stephanus Parmenius (commonly called from his native place, Budæus), who had visited Geneva with him, and heard the disputations of their most learned doctors, which both he and Budæus disliked for their hard judgments both of God and man, as much as they admired them for their subtlety, being themselves, as became Italian students, Platonists of the school of Ficinus and Picus Mirandolensis. So wrote Master Frank, in a long sententious letter, full of Latin quotations: but the letter never reached the eyes of him for whose delight it had been penned: and the widow had to weep over it alone, and to weep more bitterly than

ever at the conclusion, in which, with many excuses, Frank said that he had, at the special entreaty of the said Budæus, set out with him down the Danube stream to Buda, that he might, before finishing his travels, make experience of that learning for which the Hungarians were famous throughout Europe. And after that, though he wrote again and again to the father whom he fancied living, no letter in return reached him from home for nearly two years; till, fearing some mishap, he hurried back to England, to find his mother a widow, and his brother Amyas gone to the South Seas with Captain Drake of Plymouth. And yet, even then, after years of absence, he was not allowed to remain at home. For Sir Richard, to whom idleness was a thing horrible and unrighteous, would have him up and doing again before six months were over, and sent him off to Court to Lord Hunsdon.

There, being as delicately beautiful as his brother was huge and strong, he had speedily, by Carew's interest and that of Sidney and his Uncle Leicester, found entrance into some office in the Queen's household; and he was now basking in the full sunshine of Court favour, and fair ladies' eyes, and all the chivalries and Euphuisms of Gloriana's fairy land, and the fast friendship of that bright meteor, Sidney, who had returned with honour in 1577, from the delicate mission on behalf of the German and Belgian Protestants, on which he had been sent to the Court of Vienna, under colour of condoling with the new Emperor Rodolph, on his father's death. Frank found him when he himself came to Court in 1579, as lovely

and loving as ever; and at the early age of twenty-five, acknowledged as one of the most remarkable men of Europe, the patron of all men of letters, the counsellor of warriors and statesmen, and the confidant and advocate of William of Orange, Languet, Plessis du Mornay, and all the Protestant leaders on the Continent; and found, moreover, that the son of the poor Devon squire was as welcome as ever to the friendship of nature's and fortune's most favoured, yet most unspoilt, minion.

Poor Mrs. Leigh, as one who had long since learned to have no self, and to live not only for her children, but in them, submitted without a murmur, and only said smiling to her stern friend—"You took away my mastiff-pup, and now you must needs have my fair greyhound also."

"Would you have your fair greyhound, dear lady, grow up a tall and true Cotswold dog, that can pull down a stack of ten, or one of those smooth-skinned poppets which the Florence ladies lead about with a ring of bells round its neck, and a flannel farthingale over its loins?"

Mrs. Leigh submitted; and was rewarded after a few months by a letter sent through Sir Richard, from none other than Gloriana herself, in which she thanked her for "the loan of that most delicate and flawless crystal, the soul of her excellent son," with more praises of him than I have room to insert, and finished by exalting the poor mother above the famed Cornelia; "for those sons, whom she called her jewels, she only showed, yet kept them to herself:

but you, madam, having two as precious, I doubt not, as were ever that Roman dame's, have, beyond her courage, lent them both to your country and to your queen, who therein holds herself indebted to you for that which, if God give her grace, she will repay as becomes both her and you." Which epistle the sweet mother bedewed with holy tears, and laid by in the cedar-box which held her household gods, by the side of Frank's innumerable diplomas and letters of recommendation, the Latin whereof she was always spelling over (although she understood not a word of it), in hopes of finding here and there that precious *excellentissimus Noster Franciscus Leighius Anglus*, which was all in all to the mother's heart.

But why did Amyas go to the South Seas? Amyas went to the South Seas for two causes, each of which has before now sent many a lad to far worse places: first, because of an old schoolmaster; secondly, because of a young beauty. I will take them in order, and explain.

Vindex Brimblecombe, whilom servitor of Exeter College, Oxford (commonly called Sir Vindex, after the fashion of the times), was, in those days, master of the grammar-school of Bideford. He was, at root, a godly and kind-hearted pedant enough: but, like most schoolmasters in the old flogging days, had his heart pretty well hardened by long baneful licence to inflict pain at will on those weaker than himself; a power healthful enough for the victim (for doubtless flogging is the best of all punishments, being not only the shortest, but also a mere bodily and animal and,

not, like most of our new-fangled "humane" punishments, a spiritual and fiendish torture), but for the executioner pretty certain to eradicate from all but the noblest spirits every trace of chivalry and tenderness for the weak, as well, often, as all self-control and command of temper. Be that as it may, old Sir Vindex had heart enough to feel that it was now his duty to take especial care of the fatherless boy to whom he tried to teach his *qui*, *quæ*, *quod:* but the only outcome of that new sense of responsibility was a rapid increase in the number of floggings, which rose from about two a week, to one per diem, not without consequences to the pedagogue himself.

For all this while, Amyas had never for a moment lost sight of his darling desire for a sea life; and when he could not wander on the quay and stare at the shipping, or go down to the pebble-ridge at Northam, and there sit devouring with hungry eyes the great expanse of ocean, which seemed to woo him outward into boundless space, he used to console himself in school hours by drawing ships and imaginary charts upon his slate, instead of minding his "humanities."

Now it befel upon an afternoon, that he was very busy at a map, or bird's eye view of an island, whereon was a great castle, and at the gate thereof a dragon, terrible to see; while in the foreground came that which was meant for a gallant ship, with a great flag aloft, but which, by reason of the forest of lances with which it was crowded, looked much more like a porcupine carrying a sign-post; and at the roots of those

lances many little round o's, whereby were signified the heads of Amyas and his schoolfellows, who were about to slay that dragon, and rescue the beautiful princess who dwelt in that enchanted tower. To behold which marvel of art, all the other boys at the same desk must needs club their heads together, and with the more security, because Sir Vindex, as was his custom after dinner, was lying back in his chair, and slept the sleep of the just.

But when Amyas, by special instigation of the evil spirit who haunts successful artists, proceeded further to introduce, heedless of perspective, a rock, on which stood the lively portraiture of Sir Vindex—nose, spectacles, gown, and all; and in his hand a brandished rod, while out of his mouth a label shrieked after the runaways, "You come back!" while a similar label replied from the gallant bark, "Good-bye, master!" the shoving and tittering rose to such a pitch, that Cerberus awoke, and demanded sternly what the noise was about. To which, of course, there was no answer.

"You, of course, Leigh! Come up, sir, and show me your exercitation."

Now of Amyas's exercitation not a word was written; and, moreover, he was in the very article of putting the last touches to Mr. Brimblecombe's portrait. Whereon, to the astonishment of all hearers, he made answer—

"All in good time, sir!" and went on drawing.

"In good time, sir! Insolent, *veni et vapula!*"

But Amyas went on drawing.

"Come hither, sirrah, or I'll flay you alive!"

"Wait a bit!" answered Amyas.

The old gentleman jumped up, ferula in hand, and darted across the school, and saw himself upon the fatal slate.

"*Proh flagitium!* what have we here, villain?" and clutching at his victim, he raised the cane. Whereupon, with a serene and cheerful countenance, up rose the mighty form of Amyas Leigh, a head and shoulders above his tormentor, and that slate descended on the bald coxcomb of Sir Vindex Brimblecombe, with so shrewd a blow, that slate and pate cracked at the same instant, and the poor pedagogue dropped to the floor, and lay for dead.

After which Amyas arose, and walked out of the school, and so quietly home; and having taken counsel with himself, went to his mother, and said, "Please, mother, I've broken schoolmaster's head."

"Broken his head, thou wicked boy!" shrieked the poor widow; "what didst do that for?"

"I can't tell," said Amyas, penitently; "I couldn't help it. It looked so smooth, and bald, and round, and—you know?"

"I know? Oh, wicked boy! thou hast given place to the devil; and now, perhaps, thou hast killed him."

"Killed the devil?" asked Amyas, hopefully, but doubtfully.

"No, killed the schoolmaster, sirrah! Is he dead?"

"I don't think he's dead; his coxcomb sounded too hard for that. But had not I better go and tell Sir Richard?"

The poor mother could hardly help laughing, in spite of her terror, at Amyas's perfect coolness (which was not in the least meant for insolence), and being at her wits' end, sent him as usual to his godfather.

Amyas rehearsed his story again, with pretty nearly the same exclamations, to which he gave pretty nearly the same answers; and then—

"What was he going to do to you, then, sirrah?"

"Flog me, because I could not write my exercise, and so drew a picture of him instead."

"What! art afraid of being flogged?"

"Not a bit; besides, I'm too much accustomed to it; but I was busy, and he was in such a desperate hurry; and, oh, sir, if you had but seen his bald head, you would have broken it yourself!"

Now Sir Richard had, twenty years ago, in like place, and very much in like manner, broken the head of Vindex Brimblecombe's father, schoolmaster in his day; and therefore had a precedent to direct him; and he answered,

"Amyas, sirrah! those who cannot obey, will never be fit to rule. If thou canst not keep discipline now, thou wilt never make a company or a crew keep it when thou art grown. Dost mind that, sirrah?"

"Yes," said Amyas.

"Then go back to school this moment, sir, and be flogged."

"Very well," said Amyas, considering that he had got off very cheaply; while Sir Richard, as soon as he was out of the room, lay back in his chair, and laughed till he cried again.

So Amyas went back, and said that he was come to be flogged; whereon the old schoolmaster, whose pate had been plastered meanwhile, wept tears of joy over the returning prodigal, and then gave him such a switching as he did not forget for eight-and-forty hours.

But that evening Sir Richard sent for old Vindex, who entered, trembling, cap in hand; and having primed him with a cup of sack, said,—

"Well, Mr. Schoolmaster! My godson has been somewhat too much for you to-day. There are a couple of nobles to pay the doctor."

"O Sir Richard, *gratias tibi et Domino!* but the boy hits shrewdly hard. Nevertheless I have repaid him in inverse kind, and set him an imposition, to learn me one of Phædrus his fables, Sir Richard, if you do not think it too much."

"Which then? The one about the man who brought up a lion's cub, and was eaten by him in play at last?"

"Ah, Sir Richard! you have always a merry wit. But, indeed, the boy is a brave boy, and a quick boy, Sir Richard, but more forgetful than Lethe; and—*sapienti loquor*—it were well if he were away, for I shall never see him again without my head aching. Moreover, he put my son Jack upon the fire last Wednesday, as you would put a football, though he is a year older, your Worship, because, he said, he looked so like a roasting pig, Sir Richard."

"Alas, poor Jack!"

"And what's more, your Worship, he is *pugnax*,

bellicosus, gladiator, a fire-eater and swash-buckler, beyond all Christian measure; a very sucking Entellus, Sir Richard, and will do to death some of her majesty's lieges ere long, if he be not wisely curbed. It was but a month agone that he bemoaned himself, I hear, as Alexander did, because there were no more worlds to conquer, saying that it was a pity he was so strong, for now he had thrashed all the Bideford lads, he had no sport left; and so, as my Jack tells me, last Tuesday week he fell upon a young man of Barnstaple, Sir Richard, a hosier's man, sir, and *plebeius* (which I consider unfit for one of his blood), and, moreover, a man full grown, and as big as either of us (Vindex stood five feet four in his high-heeled shoes), and smote him clean over the quay into the mud, because he said that there was a prettier maid in Barnstaple (your Worship will forgive my speaking of such toys, to which my fidelity compels me) than ever Bideford could show; and then offered to do the same to any man who dare say that Mistress Rose Salterne, his Worship the Mayor's daughter, was not the fairest lass in all Devon."

"Eh? Say that over again, my good sir," quoth Sir Richard, who had thus arrived, as we have seen, to the second count of the indictment.

"I say, good sir, whence dost thou hear all these pretty stories?"

"My son Jack, Sir Richard, my son Jack, *ingenui vultus puer*."

"But not, it seems, *ingenui pudoris*. Tell thee what, Mr. Schoolmaster, no wonder if thy son gets

put on the fire, if thou employ him as a tale-bearer. But that is the way of all pedagogues and their sons, by which they train the lads up eaves-droppers and favour-curriers, and prepare them,—sirrah, do you hear?—for a much more lasting and hotter fire than that which has scorched thy son Jack's nether-tackle. Do you mark me, sir?"

The poor pedagogue, thus cunningly caught in his own trap, stood trembling before his patron, who, as hereditary head of the Bridge-trust, which endowed the school and the rest of the Bideford charities, could, by a turn of his finger, sweep him forth with the besom of destruction; and he gasped with terror as Sir Richard went on—

"Therefore, mind you, Sir Schoolmaster, unless you shall promise me never to hint word of what has passed between us two, and that neither you nor yours shall henceforth carry tales of my godson, or speak his name within a day's march of Mistress Salterne's, look to it, if I do not——"

What was to be done in default was not spoken; for down went poor old Vindex on his knees:—

"Oh, Sir Richard! *Excellentissime, immò præcelsissime Domine et Senator*, I promise! O sir, *Miles et Eques* of the Garter, Bath, and Golden Fleece, consider your dignities, and my old age—and my great family—nine children—oh, Sir Richard, and eight of them girls!—Do eagles war with mice? says the ancient!"

"Thy large family, eh? How old is that fat-witted son of thine?"

"Sixteen, Sir Richard; but that is not his fault, indeed!"

"Nay, I suppose he would be still sucking his thumb if he dared—get up, man—get up and seat yourself."

"Heaven forbid!" murmured poor Vindex, with deep humility.

"Why is not the rogue at Oxford, with a murrain on him, instead of lurching about here carrying tales, and ogling the maidens?"

"I had hoped, Sir Richard—and therefore I said it was not his fault—but there was never a servitorship at Exter open."

"Go to, man—go to! I will speak to my brethren of the trust, and to Oxford he shall go this autumn, or else to Exeter gaol, for a strong rogue, and a masterless man. Do you hear?"

"Hear?—oh, sir, yes! and return thanks. Jack shall go, Sir Richard, doubt it not—I were mad else; and, Sir Richard, may I go too?"

And therewith Vindex vanished, and Sir Richard enjoyed a second mighty laugh, which brought in Lady Grenvile, who possibly had overheard the whole; for the first words she said were—

"I think, my sweet life, we had better go up to Burrough."

So to Burrough they went; and after much talk, and many tears, matters were so concluded that Amyas Leigh found himself riding joyfully towards Plymouth, by the side of Sir Richard, and being handed over to Captain Drake, vanished for three years from the good town of Bideford.

And now he is returned in triumph, and the observed of all observers; and looks round and round, and sees all faces whom he expects, except one; and that the one which he had rather see than his mother's? He is not quite sure. Shame on himself!

And now the prayers being ended, the Rector ascends the pulpit, and begins his sermon on the text:—

"The heaven and the heaven of heavens are the Lord's; the whole earth hath he given to the children of men;" deducing therefrom craftily, to the exceeding pleasure of his hearers, the iniquity of the Spaniards in dispossessing the Indians, and in arrogating to themselves the sovereignty of the tropic seas; the vanity of the Pope of Rome in pretending to bestow on them the new countries of America; and the justice, valour, and glory of Mr. Drake and his expedition, as testified by God's miraculous protection of him and his, both in the Straits of Magellan, and in his battle with the Galleon; and last, but not least, upon the rock by Celebes, when the Pelican lay for hours firmly fixed, and was floated off unhurt, as it were by miracle, by a sudden shift of wind.

Ay, smile, reader, if you will; and, perhaps, there was matter for a smile in that honest sermon, interlarded, as it was, with scraps of Greek and Hebrew, which no one understood, but every one expected as their right (for a preacher was nothing then who could not prove himself "a good Latiner"); and graced, moreover, by a somewhat pedantic and

lengthy refutation from Scripture of Dan Horace's cockney horror of the sea—

"Illi robur et æs triplex," etc.

and his infidel and ungodly slander against the "impias rates," and their crews.

Smile, if you will: but those were days (and there were never less superstitious ones) in which Englishmen believed in the living God, and were not ashamed to acknowledge, as a matter of course, His help and providence, and calling, in the matters of daily life, which we now in our covert Atheism term "secular and carnal;" and when, the sermon ended, the Communion Service had begun, and the bread and the wine were given to those five mariners, every gallant gentleman who stood near them (for the press would not allow of more), knelt and received the elements with them as a thing of course, and then rose to join with heart and voice not merely in the *Gloria in Excelsis*, but in the *Te Deum*, which was the closing act of all. And no sooner had the clerk given out the first verse of that great hymn, than it was taken up by five hundred voices within the church, in bass and tenor, treble and alto (for every one could sing in those days, and the west country folk, as now, were fuller than any of music), the chaunt was caught up by the crowd outside, and rang away over roof and river, up to the woods of Annery, and down to the marshes of the Taw, in wave on wave of harmony. And as it died away, the shipping in the river made answer with their thunder, and the crowd streamed out again toward the Bridge Head, whither

Sir Richard Grenvile, and Sir John Chichester, and Mr. Salterne, the Mayor, led the five heroes of the day to await the pageant which had been prepared in honour of them. And as they went by, there were few in the crowd who did not press forward to shake them by the hand, and not only them, but their parents and kinsfolk who walked behind, till Mrs. Leigh, her stately joy quite broken down at last, could only answer between her sobs, "Go along, good people —God a mercy, go along—and God send you all such sons!"

"God give me back mine!" cried an old red-cloaked dame in the crowd; and then, struck by some hidden impulse, she sprang forward, and catching hold of young Amyas's sleeve—

"Kind sir! dear sir! For Christ his sake answer a poor old widow woman!"

"What is it, dame?" quoth Amyas, gently enough.

"Did you see my son to the Indies?—my son Salvation?"

"Salvation?" replied he, with the air of one who recollected the name.

"Yes, sure, Salvation Yeo, of Clovelly. A tall man and black, and sweareth awfully in his talk, the Lord forgive him!"

Amyas recollected now. It was the name of the sailor who had given him the wondrous horn five years ago.

"My good dame," said he, "the Indies are a very large place, and your son may be safe and sound enough there, without my having seen him. I knew

one Salvation Yeo. But he must have come with ——. By the by, godfather, has Mr. Oxenham come home?"

There was a dead silence for a moment among the gentlemen round; and then Sir Richard said solemnly, and in a low voice, turning away from the old dame,—

"Amyas, Mr. Oxenham has not come home; and from the day he sailed, no word has been heard of him, and all his crew."

"Oh, Sir Richard! and you kept me from sailing with him! Had I known this before I went into church, I had had one mercy more to thank God for."

"Thank Him all the more in thy life, my child!" whispered his mother.

"And no news of him whatsoever?"

"None; but that the year after he sailed, a ship belonging to Andrew Barker, of Bristol, took out of a Spanish caravel, somewhere off the Honduras, his two brass guns; but whence they came the Spaniard knew not, having bought them at Nombre de Dios."

"Yes!" cried the old woman; "they brought home the guns and never brought home my boy!"

"They never saw your boy, mother," said Sir Richard.

"But I've seen him! I saw him in a dream four years last Whitsuntide, as plain as I see you now, gentles, a-lying upon a rock, calling for a drop of water to cool his tongue, like Dives to the torment! Oh! dear me!" and the old dame wept bitterly.

"There is a rose noble for you!" said Mrs. Leigh.

"And there another!" said Sir Richard. And in a few minutes four or five gold coins were in her hand.

But the old dame did but look wonderingly at the gold a moment, and then—

"Ah! dear gentles, God's blessing on you, and Mr. Cary's mighty good to me already; but gold won't buy back childer! O! young gentleman! young gentleman! make me a promise; if you want God's blessing on you this day, bring me back my boy, if you find him sailing on the seas! Bring him back, and an old widow's blessing be on you!"

Amyas promised—what else could he do?—and the group hurried on; but the lad's heart was heavy in the midst of joy, with the thought of John Oxenham, as he walked through the churchyard, and down the short street which led between the ancient school and still more ancient town-house, to the head of the long bridge, across which the pageant, having arranged "east-the-water," was to defile, and then turn to the right along the quay.

However, he was bound in all courtesy to turn his attention now to the show which had been prepared in his honour; and which was really well enough worth seeing and hearing. The English were, in those days, an altogether dramatic people; ready and able, as in Bideford that day, to extemporise a pageant, a masque, or any effort of the Thespian art short of the regular drama. For they were, in the first place, even down to the very poorest, a well-fed people, with fewer luxuries than we, but more abundant necessaries; and while beef, ale, and good woollen clothes could be obtained in plenty, without overworking either body or soul, men had time to amuse themselves in some-

thing more intellectual than mere toping in pot-houses. Moreover, the half century after the Reformation in England, was one not merely of new intellectual freedom, but of immense animal good spirits. After years of dumb confusion and cruel persecution, a breathing time had come: Mary and the fires of Smithfield had vanished together like a hideous dream, and the mighty shout of joy which greeted Elizabeth's entry into London, was the key-note of fifty glorious years; the expression of a new-found strength and freedom, which vented itself at home in drama and in song; abroad in mighty conquests, achieved with the laughing recklessness of boys at play.

So first, preceded by the waits, came along the bridge toward the town-hall, a device prepared by the good rector, who, standing by, acted as showman, and explained anxiously to the bystanders the import of a certain "allegory" wherein on a great banner was depicted Queen Elizabeth herself, who, in ample ruff and farthingale, a Bible in one hand and a sword in the other, stood triumphant upon the necks of two sufficiently abject personages, whose triple tiara and imperial crown proclaimed them the Pope and the King of Spain; while a label, issuing from her royal mouth, informed the world that—

> "By land and sea a virgin queen I reign,
> And spurn to dust both Antichrist and Spain."

Which, having been received with due applause, a well-bedizened lad, having in his cap as a posy "Loyalty," stepped forward, and delivered himself of the following verses:—

"Oh, great Eliza! oh, world-famous crew!
Which shall I hail more blest, your queen or you?
While without other either falls to wrack,
And light must eyes, or eyes their light must lack.
She without you, a diamond sunk in mine,
Its worth unprized, to self alone must shine;
You without her, like hands bereft of head,
Like Ajax rage, by blindfold lust misled.
She light, you eyes; she head, and you the hands,
In fair proportion knit by heavenly bands;
Servants in queen, and queen in servants blest;
Your only glory, how to serve her best;
And hers how best the adventurous might to guide,
Which knows no check of foemen, wind, or tide,
So fair Eliza's spotless fame may fly
Triumphant round the globe, and shake th' astounded sky!"

With which sufficiently bad verses Loyalty passed on, while my Lady Bath hinted to Sir Richard, not without reason, that the poet, in trying to exalt both parties, had very sufficiently snubbed both, and intimated, that it was "hardly safe for country wits to attempt that euphuistic, antithetical, and delicately conceited vein, whose proper fountain was in Whitehall." However, on went Loyalty, very well pleased with himself, and next, amid much cheering, two great tinsel fish, a salmon, and a trout, symbolical of the wealth of Torridge, waddled along, by means of two human legs and a staff apiece, which protruded from the fishes' stomachs. They drew (or seemed to draw, for half the 'prentices in the town were shoving it behind, and cheering on the panting monarchs of the flood) a car wherein sate, amid reeds and river-flags, three or four pretty girls in robes of grey-blue spangled with gold, their heads wreathed one with a crown of

the sweet bog-myrtle, another with hops and white convolvulus, the third with pale heather and golden fern. They stopped opposite Amyas; and she of the myrtle-wreath, rising and bowing, to him and the company, began with a pretty blush to say her say:—

"Hither from my moorland home,
Nymph of Torridge, proud I come;
Leaving fen and furzy brake,
Haunt of eft and spotted snake,
Where to fill mine urns I use,
Daily with Atlantic dews;
While beside the reedy flood
Wild duck leads her paddling brood.
For this morn, as Phœbus gay
Chased through heaven the night mist grey,
Close beside me, prankt in pride,
Sister Tamar rose, and cried,
'Sluggard, up! 'Tis holiday,
In the lowlands far away.
Hark! how jocund Plymouth bells,
Wandering up through mazy dells,
Call me down, with smiles to hail,
My daring Drake's returning sail.'
'Thine alone?' I answer'd. 'Nay;
Mine as well the joy to-day.
Heroes train'd on Northern wave,
To that Argo new I gave;
Lent to thee, they roam'd the main;
Give me, nymph, my sons again.'
'Go, they wait Thee,' Tamar cried,
Southward bounding from my side.
Glad I rose, and at my call,
Came my Naiads, one and all.
Nursling of the mountain sky,
Leaving Dian's choir on high,
Down her cataracts laughing loud,
Ockment leapt from crag and cloud,
Leading many a nymph, who dwells
Where wild deer drink in ferny dells;

While the Oreads as they past
Peep'd from Druid Tors aghast.
By alder copses sliding slow,
Knee-deep in flowers came gentler Yeo,
And paused awhile her locks to twine
With musky hops and white woodbine,
Then joined the silver-footed band,
Which circled down my golden sand,
By dappled park, and harbour shady,
Haunt of love-lorn knight and lady,
My thrice-renownèd sons to greet,
With rustic song and pageant meet.
For joy! the girdled robe around
Eliza's name henceforth shall sound,
Whose venturous fleets to conquest start,
Where ended once the seaman's chart,
While circling Sol his steps shall count
Henceforth from Thule's western mount,
And lead new rulers round the seas
From furthest Cassiterides.
For found is now the golden tree,
Solv'd th' Atlantic mystery,
Pluck'd the dragon-guarded fruit;
While around the charmed root,
Wailing loud, the Hesperids
Watch their warder's drooping lids.
Low he lies with grisly wound,
While the sorceress triple-crown'd
In her scarlet robe doth shield him,
Till her cunning spells have heal'd him.
Ye, meanwhile, around the earth
Bear the prize of manful worth.
Yet a nobler meed than gold
Waits for Albion's children bold;
Great Eliza's virgin hand
Welcomes you to Fairy-land,
While your native Naiads bring
Native wreaths as offering.
Simple though their show may be,
Britain's worship in them see.

'Tis not price, nor outward fairness,
Gives the victor's palm its rareness;
Simplest tokens can impart
Noble throb to noble heart:
Græcia, prize thy parsley crown,
Boast thy laurel, Cæsar's town;
Moorland myrtle still shall be
Badge of Devon's Chivalry!"

And so ending, she took the wreath of fragrant gale from her own head, and stooping from the car, placed it on the head of Amyas Leigh, who made answer—

"There is no place like home, my fair mistress; and no scent to my taste like this old home-scent in all the spice-islands that I ever sailed by!"

"Her song was not so bad," said Sir Richard to Lady Bath—"but how came she to hear Plymouth bells at Tamar-head, full fifty miles away? That's too much of a poet's licence, is it not?"

"The river nymphs, as daughters of Oceanus, and thus of immortal parentage, are bound to possess organs of more than mortal keenness; but, as you say, the song was not so bad—crudite, as well as prettily conceived—and, saving for a certain rustical simplicity and monosyllabic baldness, smacks rather of the forests of Castaly than those of Torridge."

So spake my Lady Bath; whom Sir Richard wisely answered not; for she was a terribly learned member of the college of critics, and disputed even with Sidney's sister the chieftaincy of the Euphuists; so Sir Richard answered not, but answer was made for him.

"Since the whole choir of Muses, madam, have migrated to the Court of Whitehall, no wonder if some dews of Parnassus should fertilise at times even our Devon moors."

The speaker was a tall and slim young man, some five-and-twenty years old, of so rare and delicate a beauty, that it seemed that some Greek statue, or rather one of those pensive and pious knights whom the old German artists took delight to paint, had condescended to tread awhile this work-day earth in living flesh and blood. The forehead was very lofty and smooth, the eyebrows thin and greatly arched (the envious gallants whispered that something at least of their curve was due to art, as was also the exceeding smoothness of those delicate cheeks). The face was somewhat long and thin; the nose aquiline; and the languid mouth showed, perhaps, too much of the ivory upper teeth; but the most striking point of the speaker's appearance, was the extraordinary brilliancy of his complexion, which shamed with its whiteness that of all fair ladies round, save where open on each cheek a bright red spot gave warning, as did the long thin neck and the taper hands, of sad possibilities, perhaps not far off; possibilities which all saw with an inward sigh, except she whose doting glances, as well as her resemblance to the fair youth, proclaimed her at once his mother, Mrs. Leigh herself.

Master Frank, for he it was, was dressed in the very extravagance of the fashion,—not so much from vanity, as from that delicate instinct of self-respect which would keep some men spruce and spotless from

one year's end to another upon a desert island; "for," as Frank used to say in his sententious way, "Mr. Frank Leigh at least beholds me, though none else be by; and why should I be more discourteous to him than I permit others to be? Be sure that he who is a Grobian in his own company, will, sooner or later, become a Grobian in that of his friends."

So Mr. Frank was arrayed spotlessly; but after the latest fashion of Milan, not in trunk hose and slashed sleeves, nor in "French standing collar, treble quadruple dædalian ruff, or stiff-necked rabato, that had more arches for pride, propped up with wire and timber, than five London Bridges;" but in a close-fitting and perfectly plain suit of dove-colour, which set off cunningly the delicate proportions of his figure, and the delicate hue of his complexion, which was shaded from the sun by a broad dove-coloured Spanish hat, with feather to match, looped up over the right ear with a pearl brooch, and therein a crowned E, supposed by the damsels of Bideford to stand for Elizabeth, which was whispered to be the gift of some most illustrious hand. This same looping up was not without good reason and purpose prepense; thereby all the world had full view of a beautiful little ear, which looked as if it had been cut of cameo, and made, as my Lady Rich once told him, "to hearken only to the music of the spheres, or to the chants of cherubim." Behind the said ear was stuck a fresh rose; and the golden hair was all drawn smoothly back and round to the left temple, whence, tied with a pink ribbon in a great true lover's knot,

a mighty love-lock, "curled as it had been laid in press," rolled down low upon his bosom. Oh, Frank! Frank! have you come out on purpose to break the hearts of all Bideford burghers' daughters? And if so, did you expect to further that triumph by dyeing that pretty little pointed beard (with shame I report it) of a bright vermilion? But we know you better, Frank, and so does your mother; and you are but a masquerading angel after all, in spite of your knots and your perfumes, and the gold chain round your neck which a German princess gave you; and the emerald ring on your right fore-finger which Hatton gave you; and the pair of perfumed gloves in your left which Sidney's sister gave you; and the silver-hilted Toledo which an Italian marquis gave you, on a certain occasion of which you never choose to talk, like a prudent and modest gentleman as you are: but of which the gossips talk, of course, all the more, and whisper that you saved his life from bravoes—a dozen, at the least; and had that sword for your reward, and might have had his beautiful sister's hand beside, and I know not what else: but that you had so many lady-loves already that you were loth to burden yourself with a fresh one. That, at least, we know to be a lie, fair Frank; for your heart is as pure this day as when you knelt in your little crib at Burrough, and said—

> "Four corners to my bed;
> Four angels round my head;
> Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
> Bless the bed that I lie on."

And who could doubt it (if being pure themselves, they have instinctive sympathy with what is pure), who ever looked into those great deep blue eyes of yours, "the black fringed curtains of whose azure lids," usually down-dropt as if in deepest thought, you raise slowly, almost wonderingly, each time you speak, as if awakening from some fair dream whose home is rather in your Platonical "eternal world of supra-sensible forms," than on that work-day earth wherein you nevertheless acquit yourself so well? There—I must stop describing you, or I shall catch the infection of your own Euphuism, and talk of you as you would have talked of Sidney, or of Spenser, or of that Swan of Avon, whose song had just begun when yours—— but I will not anticipate; my Lady Bath is waiting to give you her rejoinder.

"Ah, my silver-tongued scholar! and are you, then, the poet? or have you been drawing on the inexhaustible bank of your friend Raleigh, or my cousin Sidney? or has our new Cygnet Immerito lent you a few unpublished leaves from some fresh Shepherd's Calendar?"

"Had either, madam, of that cynosural triad been within call of my most humble importunities, your ears had been delectate with far nobler melody."

"But not our eyes with fairer faces, eh? Well, you have chosen your nymphs, and had good store from whence to pick, I doubt not. Few young Dulcinas round but must have been glad to take service under so renowned a captain?"

"The only difficulty, gracious Countess, has been

to know where to fix the wandering choice of my bewildered eyes, where all alike are fair, and all alike facund."

"We understand," said she, smiling;—

"Dan Cupid, choosing 'midst his mother's graces,
Himself more fair, made scorn of fairest faces."

The young scholar capped her distich forthwith, and bowing to her with a meaning look,

"'Then, Goddess, turn,' he cried, 'and veil thy light;
Blinded by thine, what eyes can choose aright?'"

"Go, saucy sir," said my lady, in high glee; "the pageant stays your supreme pleasure."

And away went Mr. Frank as master of the revels, to bring up the 'prentices' pageant; while, for his sake, the nymph of Torridge was forgotten for awhile by all young dames, and most young gentlemen; and his mother heaved a deep sigh, which Lady Bath overhearing—

"What? in the dumps, good madam, while all are rejoicing in your joy? Are you afraid that we court-dames shall turn your young Adonis' brain for him?"

"I do, indeed, fear lest your condescension should make him forget that he is only a poor squire's orphan."

"I will warrant him never to forget aught that he should recollect," said my Lady Bath.

And she spoke truly. But soon Frank's silver voice was heard calling out,

"Room there, good people, for the gallant 'prentice lads!"

And on they came, headed by a giant of buckram and pasteboard armour, forth of whose stomach looked,

like a clock-face in a steeple, a human visage, to be greeted, as was the fashion then, by a volley of quips and puns from high and low.

Young Mr. William Cary, of Clovelly, who was the wit of those parts, opened the fire by asking him whether he were Goliath, Gogmagog, or Grantorto in the romance; for giants' names always began with a G. To which the giant's stomach answered pretty surlily,—

"Mine don't; I begin with an O."

"Then thou criest out before thou art hurt, O cowardly giant!"

"Let me out, lads," quoth the irascible visage, struggling in his buckram prison, "and I soon show him whether I be a coward."

"Nay, if thou gettest out of thyself, thou wouldst be beside thyself, and so wert but a mad giant."

"And that were pity," said Lady Bath; "for by the romances, giants have never over much wit to spare."

"Mercy, dear Lady!" said Frank, "and let the giant begin with an O."

"A——"

"A false start, giant! you were to begin with an O."

"I'll make you end with an O, Mr. William Cary!" roared the testy tower of buckram.

"And so I do, for I end with 'Fico!'"

"Be mollified, sweet giant," said Frank, "and spare the rash youth of yon foolish Knight. Shall elephants catch flies, or Hurlo-Thrumbo stain his club with brains of Dagonet the jester? Be mollified; leave

thy caverned grumblings, like Etna when its windy wrath is past, and discourse eloquence from thy central omphalos, like Pythoness ventriloquising."

"If you do begin laughing at me too, Mr. Leigh——" said the giant's clock-face, in a piteous tone.

"I laugh not. Art thou not Ordulf the earl, and I thy humblest squire? Speak up, my Lord; your cousin, my Lady Bath, commands you."

And at last the giant began:—

"A giant I, Earl Ordulf men me call,—
'Gainst Paynim foes Devonia's champion tall:
In single fight six thousand Turks I slew;
Pull'd off a lion's head, and ate it too:
With one shrewd blow, to let Saint Edward in,
I smote the gates of Exeter in twain;
Till aged grown, by angels warn'd in dream,
I built an abbey fair by Tavy stream.
But treacherous time hath tripp'd my glories up,
The staunch old hound must yield to stauncher pup;
Here's one so tall as I, and twice so bold,
Where I took only cuffs, takes good red gold.
From pole to pole resound his wondrous works,
Who slew more Spaniards than I ere slew Turks;
I strode across the Tavy stream: but he
Strode round the world and back; and here 'a be!"

"Oh, bathos!" said Lady Bath, while the 'prentices shouted applause. "Is this hedgebantling to be fathered on you, Mr. Frank?"

"It is necessary, by all laws of the drama, Madam," said Frank, with a sly smile, "that the speech and the speaker shall fit each other. Pass on, Earl Ordulf; a more learned worthy waits."

Whereon, up came a fresh member of the pro-

cession; namely, no less a person than Vindex Brimblecombe, the ancient schoolmaster, with five-and-forty boys at his heels, who halting, pulled out his spectacles, and thus signified his forgiveness of his whilome broken head:—

"That the world should have been circumnavigated, ladies and gentles, were matter enough of jubilation to the student of Herodotus and Plato, Plinius and—— ahem: much more when the circumnavigators are Britons; more, again, when Damnonians."

"Don't swear, master," said young Will Cary.

"Gulielme Cary, Gulielme Cary, hast thou forgotten thy——"

"Whippings? Never, old lad! Go on; but let not the licence of the scholar overtop the modesty of the Christian."

"More again, as I said, when, *incolæ*, inhabitants of Devon; but, most of all, men of Bideford School. Oh renowned school! Oh schoolboys ennobled by fellowship with him! Oh most happy pedagogue, to whom it has befallen to have chastised a circumnavigator, and, like another Chiron, trained another Hercules: yet more than Hercules, for he placed his pillars on the ocean shore, and then returned; but my scholar's voyage——"

"Hark how the old fox is praising himself all along on the sly," said Cary.

"Mr. William, Mr. William, peace;—*silentium*, my graceless pupil. Urge the foaming steed, and strike terror into the rapid stag, but meddle not with matters too high for thee."

"He has given you the dor now, sir," said Lady Bath; "let the old man say his say."

"I bring, therefore, as my small contribution to this day's feast; first a Latin epigram, as thus——"

"Latin? Let us hear it forthwith," cried my Lady.

And the old pedant mouthed out,—

"Torriguiam Tamaris ne spernat; Leighius addet
Mox terras terris, inclyte Drake, tuis."

"Neat, i' faith, la!" Whereon all the rest, as in duty bound, approved also.

"This for the erudite: for vulgar ears the vernacular is more consonant, sympathetic, instructive; as thus:—

"Famed Argo ship, that noble chip, by doughty Jason's steering,
Brought back to Greece the golden fleece, from Colchis home careering;
But now her fame is put to shame, while new Devonian Argo,
Round earth doth run in wake of sun, and brings a wealthier cargo."

"Runs with a right fa-lal-la," observed Cary; "and would go nobly to a fiddle and a big drum."

"Ye Spaniards, quake! our doughty Drake a royal swan is tested,
On wing and oar, from shore to shore, the raging main who breasted:—
But never needs to chant his deeds, like swan that lies a-dying,
So far his name by trump of fame, around the sphere is flying."

"Hillo ho! schoolmaster!" shouted a voice from behind; "move on, and make way for father Neptune!"

Whereon a whole storm of raillery fell upon the hapless pedagogue.

"We waited for the parson's alligator, but we wain't for your'n."

"Allegory! my children, allegory!" shrieked the man of letters.

"What do ye call he an alligator for? He is but a poor little starved evat!"

"Out of the road, Old Custis! March on, Don Palmado!"

These allusions to the usual instrument of torture in west country schools made the old gentleman wince; especially when they were followed home by—

"Who stole Admiral Grenvile's brooms, because birch rods were dear?"

But proudly he shook his bald head, as a bull shakes off the flies, and returned to the charge once more.

"Great Alexander, famed commander, wept and made a pother,
At conquering only half the world, but Drake had conquer'd t'other;
And Hercules to brink of seas!——"

"Oh!——"

And clapping both hands to the back of his neck, the schoolmaster began dancing frantically about, while his boys broke out tittering, "O! the ochidore! look to the blue ochidore! Who've put ochidore to maister's poll?"

It was too true: neatly inserted, as he stooped forward, between his neck and his collar, was a large live shore-crab, holding on tight with both hands.

"Gentles! good Christians! save me! I am mare-rode! *Incubo, vel ab incubo, opprimor!* Satanas has me by the poll! Help! he tears my jugular; he wrings my neck, as he does to Dr. Faustus in the play. *Confiteor!*—I confess! Satan, I defy thee! Good people, I confess! Βασανιζόμαι! The truth will out. Mr. Francis Leigh wrote the epigram!" And diving through the crowd, the pedagogue vanished howling, while Father Neptune, crowned with sea-weeds, a trident in one hand, and a live dog-fish in the other, swaggered up the street, surrounded by a tall body-guard of mariners, and followed by a great banner, on which was depicted a globe, with Drake's ship sailing thereon upside down, and overwritten—

"See every man the Pelican,
Which round the world did go,
While her stern-post was uppermost,
And topmasts down below.
And by the way she lost a day,
Out of her log was stole:
But Neptune kind, with favouring wind,
Hath brought her safe and whole."

"Now, lads!" cried Neptune; "hand me my parable that's writ for me, and here goeth!" And at the top of his bull-voice, he began roaring,—

"I am King Neptune bold,
The ruler of the seas;
I don't understand much singing upon land,
But I hope what I say will please.

"Here be five Bideford men,
Which have sail'd the world around,
And I watch'd them well, as they all can tell,
And brought them home safe and sound.

"For it is the men of Devon.
To see them I take delight,
Both to tack and to hull, and to heave and to pull,
And to prove themselves in fight.

"Where be those Spaniards proud,
That make their valiant boasts;
And think for to keep the poor Indians for their sheep,
And to farm my golden coasts?

"'Twas the devil and the Pope gave them
My kingdom for their own:
But my nephew Francis Drake, he caused them to quake,
And he pick'd them to the bone.

"For the sea my realm it is,
As good Queen Bess's is the land;
So freely come again, all merry Devon men,
And there's old Neptune's hand."

"Holla, boys! holla! Blow up, Triton, and bring forward the freedom of the seas."

Triton, roaring through a conch, brought forward a cockle-shell full of salt-water, and delivered it solemnly to Amyas, who, of course, put a noble into it, and returned it after Grenvile had done the same.

"Holla, Dick Admiral!" cried Neptune, who was pretty far gone in liquor; "we knew thou hadst a right English heart in thee, for all thou standest there as taut as a Don who has swallowed his rapier."

"Grammercy, stop thy bellowing, fellow, and on; for thou smellest vilely of fish."

"Everything smells sweet in its right place. I'm going home."

"I thought thou wert there all along, being already half-seas over," said Cary.

"Ay, right Upsee-Dutch; and that's more than

thou ever wilt be, thou 'long-shore stay-at-home. Why wast making sheep's eyes at Mistress Salterne here, while my pretty little chuck of Burrough there was playing at shove-groat with Spanish doubloons?"

"Go to the devil, sirrah!" said Cary. Neptune had touched on a sore subject; and more cheeks than Amyas Leigh's reddened at the hint.

"Amen, if heaven so please!" and on rolled the monarch of the seas; and so the pageant ended.

The moment Amyas had an opportunity, he asked his brother Frank, somewhat peevishly, where Rose Salterne was.

"What! the mayor's daughter? With her uncle, by Kilkhampton, I believe."

Now cunning Master Frank, whose daily wish was to "seek peace and ensue it," told Amyas this, because he must needs speak the truth: but he was purposed at the same time to speak as little truth as he could, for fear of accidents; and, therefore, omitted to tell his brother how that he, two days before, had entreated Rose Salterne herself to appear as the nymph of Torridge; which honour she, who had no objection either to exhibit her pretty face, to recite pretty poetry, or to be trained thereto by the cynosure of North Devon, would have assented willingly, but that her father stopped the pretty project by a peremptory countermove, and packed her off, in spite of her tears, to the said uncle on the Atlantic cliffs; after which he went up to Burrough, and laughed over the whole matter with Mrs. Leigh.

"I am but a burgher, Mrs. Leigh, and you a lady

of blood; but I am too proud to let any man say that Simon Salterne threw his daughter at your son's head; —no; not if you were an empress!"

"And, to speak truth, Mr. Salterne, there are young gallants enough in the country quarrelling about her pretty face every day, without making her a tourney-queen to tilt about."

Which was very true; for during the three years of Amyas's absence, Rose Salterne had grown into so beautiful a girl of eighteen, that half North Devon was mad about the "Rose of Torridge," as she was called; and there was not a young gallant for ten miles round (not to speak of her father's clerks and 'prentices, who moped about after her like so many Malvolios, and treasured up the very parings of her nails) who would not have gone to Jerusalem to win her. So that all along the vales of Torridge and of Taw, and even away to Clovelly (for young Mr. Cary was one of the sick), not a gay bachelor but was frowning on his fellows, and vieing with them in the fashion of his clothes, the set of his ruffs, the harness of his horse, the carriage of his hawks, the pattern of his sword-hilt; and those were golden days for all tailors and armourers, from Exmoor to Okehampton town. But of all those foolish young lads not one would speak to the other, either out hunting, or at the archery butts, or in the tilt-yard; and my Lady Bath (who confessed that there was no use in bringing out her daughters where Rose Salterne was in the way) prophesied in her classical fashion that Rose's wedding bid fair to be a very bridal of Atalanta, and

feast of the Lapithæ; and poor Mr. Will Cary (who always blurted out the truth), when Old Salterne once asked him angrily, in Bideford Market, "What a plague business had he making sheep's eyes at his daughter?" broke out before all bystanders, "And what a plague business had you, old boy, to throw such an apple of discord into our merry meetings hereabouts? If you choose to have such a daughter, you must take the consequences, and be hanged to you." To which Mr. Salterne answered with some truth, "That she was none of his choosing, nor of Mr. Cary's neither." And so the dor being given, the belligerents parted laughing, but the war remained *in statu quo;* and not a week passed but, by mysterious hands, some nosegay, or languishing sonnet, was conveyed into The Rose's chamber, all which she stowed away, with the simplicity of a country girl, finding it mighty pleasant; and took all compliments quietly enough, probably because, on the authority of her mirror, she considered them no more than her due.

And, now, to add to the general confusion, home was come young Amyas Leigh, more desperately in love with her than ever. For, as is the way with sailors (who after all are the truest lovers, as they are the finest fellows, God bless them, upon earth), his lonely ship-watches had been spent in imprinting on his imagination, month after month, year after year, every feature and gesture and tone of the fair lass whom he had left behind him; and that all the more intensely, because, beside his mother, he had no one else to think of, and was as pure as the day he

was born, having been trained as many a brave young man was then, to look upon profligacy not as a proof of manhood, but as what the old Germans, and those Gortyneans who crowned the offender with wool, knew it to be, a cowardly and effeminate sin.

CHAPTER III.

OF TWO GENTLEMEN OF WALES, AND HOW THEY HUNTED WITH THE HOUNDS, AND YET RAN WITH THE DEER.

"I know that Deformed; he has been a vile thief this seven year; he goes up and down like a gentleman: I remember his name."—*Much Ado about Nothing.*

AMYAS slept that night a tired and yet a troubled sleep; and his mother and Frank, as they bent over his pillow, could see that his brain was busy with many dreams.

And no wonder; for over and above all the excitement of the day, the recollection of John Oxenham had taken strange possession of his mind; and all that evening, as he sat in the bay-windowed room where he had seen him last, Amyas was recalling to himself every look and gesture of the lost adventurer, and wondering at himself for so doing, till he retired to sleep, only to renew the fancy in his dreams. At last he found himself, he knew not how, sailing westward ever, up the wake of the setting sun, in chase of a tiny sail, which was John Oxenham's. Upon him was a painful sense that, unless he came up with her in time, something fearful would come to pass: but the ship would not sail. All around floated the sar-

gasso beds, clogging her bows with their long snaky coils of weed; and still he tried to sail, and tried to fancy that he was sailing, till the sun went down, and all was utter dark. And then the moon arose, and in a moment John Oxenham's ship was close abroad; her sails were torn and fluttering; the pitch was streaming from her sides; her bulwarks were rotting to decay. And what was that line of dark objects dangling along the main-yard?—A line of hanged men! And, horror of horrors, from the yard-arm close above him, John Oxenham's corpse looked down with grave-light eyes, and beckoned and pointed, as if to show him his way, and strove to speak, and could not, and pointed still, not forward, but back along their course. And when Amyas looked back, behold, behind him was the snow range of the Andes glittering in the moon, and he knew that he was in the South Seas once more, and that all America was between him and home. And still the corpse kept pointing back, and back, and looking at him with yearning eyes of agony, and lips which longed to tell some awful secret; till he sprang up, and woke with a shout of terror, and found himself lying in the little coved chamber in dear old Burrough, with the grey autumn morning already stealing in.

Feverish and excited, he tried in vain to sleep again; and after an hour's tossing, rose and dressed, and started for a bathe on his beloved old pebble ridge. As he passed his mother's door, he could not help looking in. The dim light of morning showed him the bed; but its pillow had not been pressed that night. His mother, in her long white night-dress,

was kneeling at the other end of the chamber at her prie-dieu, absorbed in devotion. Gently he slipped in without a word, and knelt down at her side. She turned, smiled, passed her arm around him, and went on silently with her prayers. Why not? They were for him, and he knew it, and prayed also; and his prayers were for her, and for poor lost John Oxenham, and all his vanished crew.

At last she rose, and standing above him, parted the yellow locks from off his brow, and looked long and lovingly into his face. There was nothing to be spoken, for there was nothing to be concealed between these two souls as clear as glass. Each knew all which the other meant; each knew that its own thoughts were known. At last the mutual gaze was over; she stooped and kissed him on the brow, and was in the act to turn away, as a tear dropped on his forehead. Her little bare feet were peeping out from under her dress. He bent down and kissed them again and again; and then looking up, as if to excuse himself,—

"You have such pretty feet, mother!"

Instantly, with a woman's instinct, she had hidden them. She had been a beauty once, as I said; and though her hair was grey, and her roses had faded long ago, she was beautiful still, in all eyes which saw deeper than the mere outward red and white.

"Your dear father used to say so, thirty years ago."

"And I say so still: you always were beautiful; you are beautiful now."

"What is that to you, silly boy? Will you play

the lover with an old mother? Go and take your walk, and think of younger ladies, if you can find any worthy of you."

And so the son went forth, and the mother returned to her prayers.

He walked down to the pebble ridge, where the surges of the bay have defeated their own fury, by rolling up in the course of ages a rampart of grey boulder-stones, some two miles long, as cunningly curved, and smoothed, and fitted, as if the work had been done by human hands, which protects from the high tides of spring and autumn a fertile sheet of smooth, alluvial turf. Sniffing the keen salt air like a young sea-dog, he stripped and plunged into the breakers, and dived, and rolled, and tossed about the foam with stalwart arms, till he heard himself hailed from off the shore, and looking up, saw standing on the top of the rampart the tall figure of his cousin Eustace.

Amyas was half-disappointed at his coming; for, love-lorn rascal, he had been dreaming all the way thither of Rose Salterne, and had no wish for a companion who would prevent his dreaming of her all the way back. Nevertheless, not having seen Eustace for three years, it was but civil to scramble out and dress, while his cousin walked up and down upon the turf inside.

Eustace Leigh was the son of a younger brother of Leigh of Burrough, who had more or less cut himself off from his family, and indeed from his countrymen, by remaining a Papist. True, though born a Papist,

he had not always been one; for, like many of the gentry, he had become a Protestant under Edward the Sixth, and then a Papist again under Mary. But, to his honour be it said, at that point he had stopped, having too much honesty to turn Protestant a second time, as hundreds did, at Elizabeth's accession. So a Papist he remained, living out of the way of the world in a great, rambling, dark house, still called "Chapel," on the Atlantic cliffs, in Moorwinstow parish, not far from Sir Richard Grenvile's house of Stow. The penal laws never troubled him; for, in the first place, they never troubled any one who did not make conspiracy and rebellion an integral doctrine of his religious creed; and next, they seldom troubled even them, unless, fired with the glory of martyrdom, they bullied the long-suffering of Elizabeth and her council into giving them their deserts, and, like poor Father Southwell in after years, insisted on being hanged, whether Burleigh liked or not. Moreover, in such a no-man's-land and end-of-all-the-earth was that old house at Moorwinstow, that a dozen conspiracies might have been hatched there without any one hearing of it; and Jesuits and seminary priests skulked in and out all the year round, unquestioned though unblest; and found a sort of piquant pleasure, like naughty boys who have crept into the store-closet, in living in mysterious little dens in a lonely turret, and going up through a trap-door to celebrate mass in a secret chamber in the roof, where they were allowed by the powers that were to play as much as they chose at persecuted saints, and preach about hiding in dens and caves of

the earth. For once, when the zealous parson of Moorwinstow, having discovered (what everybody knew already) the existence of "mass priests and their idolatry" at Chapel house, made formal complaint thereof to Sir Richard, and called on him, as the nearest justice of the peace, to put in force the Act of the fourteenth of Elizabeth, that worthy knight only rated him soundly for a fantastical puritan, and bade him mind his own business, if he wished not to make the place too hot for him; whereon (for the temporal authorities, happily for the peace of England, kept in those days a somewhat tight hand upon the spiritual ones) the worthy parson subsided,—for, after all, Mr. Thomas Leigh paid his tithes regularly enough,—and was content, as he expressed it, to bow his head in the house of Rimmon like Naaman of old, by eating Mr. Leigh's dinners as often as he was invited, and ignoring the vocation of old Father Francis, who sat opposite to him, dressed as a layman, and calling himself the young gentleman's pedagogue.

But the said birds of ill omen had a very considerable lien on the conscience of poor Mr. Thomas Leigh, the father of Eustace, in the form of certain lands once belonging to the Abbey of Hartland. He more than half believed that he should be lost for holding those lands; but he did not believe it wholly, and, therefore, he did not give them up; which was the case, as poor Mary Tudor found to her sorrow, with most of her "Catholic" subjects, whose consciences, while they compelled them to return to the only safe fold of Mother Church (*extrà quam nulla salus*), by no

means compelled them to disgorge the wealth of which they had plundered that only hope of their salvation. Most of them, however, like poor Tom Leigh, felt the abbey rents burn in their purses; and, as John Bull generally does in a difficulty, compromised the matter by a second folly (as if two wrong things made one right one) and petted foreign priests, and listened, or pretended not to listen, to their plottings and their practisings; and gave up a son here, and a son there, as a sort of a sin-offering and scape-goat, to be carried off to Douay, or Rheims, or Rome, and trained as a seminary priest; in plain English, to be taught the science of villany, on the motive of superstition. One of such hapless scape-goats, and children who had been cast into the fire to Moloch, was Eustace Leigh, whom his father had sent, giving the fruit of his body for the sin of his soul, to be made a liar of at Rheims.

And a very fair liar he had become. Not that the lad was a bad fellow at heart; but he had been chosen by the harpies at home, on account of his "peculiar vocation;" in plain English, because the wily priests had seen in him certain capacities of vague hysterical fear of the unseen (the religious sentiment, we call it now-a-days), and with them that tendency to be a rogue, which superstitious men always have. He was now a tall, handsome, light-complexioned man, with a huge upright forehead, a very small mouth, and a dry and set expression of face, which was always trying to get free, or rather to seem free, and indulge in smiles and dimples, which were proper; for one ought to have Christian love, and if one had love one

ought to be cheerful, and when people were cheerful they smiled; and therefore he would smile, and tried to do so; but his charity prepense looked no more alluring than malice prepense would have done; and, had he not been really a handsome fellow, many a woman who raved about his sweetness would have likened his frankness to that of a skeleton dancing in fetters, and his smiles to the grins thereof.

He had returned to England about a month before, in obedience to the proclamation which had been set forth for that purpose (and certainly not before it was needed), that, "whosoever had children, wards, etc., in the parts beyond the seas, should send in their names to the ordinary, and within four months call them home again." So Eustace was now staying with his father at Chapel, having, nevertheless, his private matters to transact on behalf of the virtuous society by whom he had been brought up; one of which private matters had brought him to Bideford the night before.

So he sat down beside Amyas on the pebbles, and looked at him all over out of the corners of his eyes very gently, as if he did not wish to hurt him, or even the flies on his back; and Amyas faced right round, and looked him full in the face, with the heartiest of smiles, and held out a lion's paw, which Eustace took rapturously, and a great shaking of hands ensued; Amyas gripping with a great round fist, and a quiet quiver thereof, as much as to say, "I *am* glad to see you;" and Eustace pinching hard with quite straight fingers, and sawing the air violently up and down, as

much as to say, "*Don't you see* how glad I am to see you?" A very different greeting from the former.

"Hold hard, old lad," said Amyas, "before you break my elbow. And where do you come from?"

"From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it," said he, with a little smile and nod of mysterious self-importance.

"Like the devil, eh? Well, every man has his pattern. How is my uncle?"

Now, if there was one man on earth above another, of whom Eustace Leigh stood in dread, it was his cousin Amyas. In the first place, he knew Amyas could have killed him with a blow; and there are natures, who, instead of rejoicing in the strength of men of greater prowess than themselves, look at such with irritation, dread, at last, spite; expecting, perhaps, that the stronger will do to them what they feel they might have done in his place. Every one, perhaps, has the same envious, cowardly devil haunting about his heart; but the brave men, though they be very sparrows, kick him out; the cowards keep him, and foster him; and so did poor Eustace Leigh.

Next, he could not help feeling that Amyas despised him. They had not met for three years; but before Amyas went, Eustace never could argue with him; simply because Amyas treated him as beneath argument. No doubt he was often rude and unfair enough; but the whole mass of questions concerning the unseen world, which the priests had stimulated in his cousin's mind into an unhealthy fungus crop,

were to Amyas simply, as he expressed it, "wind and moonshine;" and he treated his cousin as a sort of harmless lunatic, and, as they say in Devon, "half-baked." And Eustace knew it; and knew, too, that his cousin did him an injustice. "He used to undervalue me," said he to himself; "let us see whether he does not find me a match for him now." And then went off into an agony of secret contrition for his self-seeking and his forgetting that "the glory of God, and not his own exaltation," was the object of his existence.

There, dear readers, *Ex pede Herculem;* I cannot tire myself or you (especially in this book) with any wire-drawn soul-dissections. I have tried to hint to you two opposite sorts of men. The one trying to be good with all his might and main, according to certain approved methods and rules, which he has got by heart; and like a weak oarsman, feeling and fingering his spiritual muscles over all day, to see if they are growing. The other, not even knowing whether he is good or not, but just doing the right thing without thinking about it, as simply as a little child, because the Spirit of God is with him. If you cannot see the great gulf fixed between the two, I trust that you will discover it some day.

But in justice be it said, all this came upon Eustace, not because he was a Romanist, but because he was educated by the Jesuits. Had he been saved from them, he might have lived and died as simple and honest a gentleman as his brothers, who turned out like true Englishmen (as did all the Romish laity) to face the great Armada, and one of whom was fighting

at that very minute under St. Leger in Ireland, and as brave and loyal a soldier as those Roman Catholics whose noble blood has stained every Crimæan battle-field; but his fate was appointed otherwise; and the Upas-shadow which has blighted the whole Romish Church, blighted him also.

"Ah, my dearest cousin!" said Eustace, "how disappointed I was this morning at finding I had arrived just a day too late to witness your triumph! But I hastened to your home as soon as I could, and learning from your mother that I should find you here, hurried down to bid you welcome again to Devon."

"Well, old lad, it does look very natural to see you. I often used to think of you walking the deck o' nights. Uncle and the girls are all right, then? But is the old pony dead yet? And how's Dick the smith, and Nancy? Grown a fine maid by now, I warrant. 'Slid, it seems half a life that I've been away."

"And you really thought of your poor cousin? Be sure that he, too, thought of you, and offered up nightly his weak prayers for your safety (doubtless, not without avail) to those saints, to whom would that you——"

"Halt there, coz. If they are half as good fellows as you and I take them for, they'll help me without asking."

"They have helped you, Amyas."

"Maybe; I'd have done as much, I'm sure, for them, if I'd been in their place."

"And do you not feel, then, that you owe a debt of gratitude to them; and, above all, to her, whose intercessions have, I doubt not, availed for your preservation? Her, the star of the sea, the all-compassionate guide of the mariner?"

"Humph!" said Amyas. "Here's Frank; let him answer."

And, as he spoke, up came Frank, and after due greetings, sat down beside them on the ridge.

"I say, brother, here's Eustace trying already to convert me; and telling me that I owe all my luck to the Blessed Virgin's prayers for me."

"It may be so," said Frank; "at least you owe it to the prayers of that most pure and peerless virgin, by whose commands you sailed; the sweet incense of whose orisons have gone up for you daily, and for whose sake you were preserved from flood and foe, that you might spread the fame and advance the power of the spotless championess of truth, and right, and freedom,—Elizabeth, your queen."

Amyas answered this rhapsody, which would have been then both fashionable and sincere, by a loyal chuckle. Eustace smiled meekly: but answered somewhat venomously nevertheless,

"I, at least, am certain that I speak the truth, when I call my patroness a virgin undefiled."

Both the brothers' brows clouded at once. Amyas, as he lay on his back on the pebbles, said quietly to the gulls over his head,

"I wonder what the Frenchman, whose head I cut off at the Azores, thinks by now about all that."

"Cut off a Frenchman's head?" said Frank.

"Yes, faith; and so fleshed my maiden sword. I'll tell you. It was in some tavern; I and George Drake had gone in, and there sat this Frenchman, with his sword on the table, ready for a quarrel (I found afterwards he was a noted bully), and begins with us loudly enough about this and that; but, after awhile, by the instigation of the devil, what does he vent but a dozen slanders against her Majesty's honour, one a top of the other. I was ashamed to hear them, and I should be more ashamed to repeat them."

"I have heard enough of such," said Frank. "They come mostly through lewd rascals about the French ambassador, who have been bred (God help them) among the filthy vices of that Medicean Court, in which the Queen of Scots had her schooling; and can only perceive in a virtuous freedom, a cloke for licentiousness like their own. Let the curs bark; *Honi soit qui mal y pense* is our motto, and shall be for ever."

"But I didn't let the cur bark; for I took him by the ears, to show him out into the street. Whereon he got to his sword, and I to mine; and a very near chance I had of never bathing on the pebble-ridge more; for the fellow did not fight with edge and buckler, like a Christian, but had some newfangled French devil's device of scryming and foining with his point, ha'ing and stamping, and tracing at me, that I expected to be full of eyelet-holes ere I could close with him."

"Thank God that you are safe, then!" said Frank. "I know that play well enough, and dangerous enough it is."

"Of course you know it; but I didn't, more's the pity."

"Well, I'll teach it thee, lad, as well as Rowland Yorke himself,

> 'Thy fincture, carricade, and sly passata,
> Thy stramazon, and resolute stoccata,
> Wiping maudritta, closing embrocata,
> And all the cant of the honourable fencing mystery.'"

"Rowland Yorke? Who's he, then?"

"A very roystering rascal, who is making good profit in London just now by teaching this very art of fence; and is as likely to have his mortal thread clipt in a tavern brawl, as thy Frenchman. But how did you escape his pinking iron?"

"How? Had it through my left arm before I could look round; and at that I got mad, and leapt upon him, and caught him by the wrist, and then had a fair side-blow; and, as fortune would have it, off tumbled his head on to the table, and there was an end of his slanders."

"So perish all her enemies!" said Frank; and Eustace, who had been trying not to listen, rose and said,

"I trust that you do not number me among them?"

"As you speak, I do, coz," said Frank. "But for your own sake, let me advise you to put faith in the true report of those who have daily experience of their

mistress's excellent virtue, as they have of the sun's shining, and of the earth's bringing forth fruit, and not in the tattle of a few cowardly back-stair rogues, who wish to curry favour with the Guises. Come, we will say no more. Walk round with us by Appledore, and then home to breakfast."

But Eustace declined, having immediate business, he said, in Northam town, and then in Bideford; and so left them to lounge for another half-hour on the beach, and then walk across the smooth sheet of turf to the little white fishing village, which stands some two miles above the bar, at the meeting of the Torridge and the Taw.

Now it came to pass, that Eustace Leigh, as we have seen, told his cousins that he was going to Northam: but he did not tell them that his point was really the same as their own, namely, Appledore; and, therefore, after having satisfied his conscience by going as far as the very nearest house in Northam village, he struck away sharp to the left across the fields, repeating I know not what to the Blessed Virgin all the way; whereby he went several miles out of his road; and also, as is the wont of crooked spirits, Jesuits especially (as three centuries sufficiently testify), only outwitted himself. For his cousins going merrily, like honest men, along the straight road across the turf, arrived in Appledore, opposite the little "Mariner's Rest" Inn, just in time to see what Eustace had taken so much trouble to hide from them, namely, four of Mr. Thomas Leigh's horses standing at the door, held by his groom, saddles and mail-bags

on back, and mounting three of them, Eustace Leigh and two strange gentlemen.

"There's one lie already this morning," growled Amyas; "he told us he was going to Northam."

"And we do not know that he has not been there," blandly suggested Frank.

"Why, you are as bad a Jesuit as he, to help him out with such a fetch."

"He may have changed his mind."

"Bless your pure imagination, my sweet boy," said Amyas, laying his great hand on Frank's head, and mimicking his mother's manner. "I say, dear Frank, let's step into this shop and buy a pennyworth of whipcord."

"What do you want with whipcord, man?"

"To spin my top, to be sure."

"Top? how long hast had a top?"

"I'll buy one, then, and save my conscience; but the upshot of this sport I must see. Why may not I have an excuse ready made as well as Master Eustace?"

So saying, he pulled Frank into the little shop, unobserved by the party at the inn-door.

"What strange cattle has he been importing now? Look at that three-legged fellow, trying to get aloft on the wrong side. How he claws at his horse's ribs, like a cat scratching an elder stem!"

The three-legged man was a tall, meek-looking person, who had bedizened himself with gorgeous garments, a great feather, and a sword so long and broad, that it differed little in size from the very thin

and stiff shanks, between which it wandered uncomfortably.

"Young David in Saul's weapons," said Frank. "He had better not go in them, for he certainly has not proved them."

"Look, if his third leg is not turned into a tail! Why does not some one in charity haul in half-a-yard of his belt for him?"

It was too true; the sword, after being kicked out three or four times from its uncomfortable post between his legs, had returned unconquered; and the hilt getting a little too far back by reason of the too great length of the belt, the weapon took up its post triumphantly behind, standing out point in air, a tail confest, amid the tittering of the ostlers, and the cheers of the sailors.

At last the poor man, by dint of a chair, was mounted safely, while his fellow stranger, a burly, coarse-looking man, equally gay, and rather more handy, made so fierce a rush at his saddle, that like "vaulting ambition who o'erleaps his selle," he "fell on t'other side:" or would have fallen, had he not been brought up short by the shoulders of the ostler at his off-stirrup. In which shock off came hat and feather.

"Pardie, the bulldog-faced one is a fighting man. Dost see, Frank? he has had his head broken."

"That scar came not, my son, but by a pair of most Catholic and apostolic scissors. My gentle buzzard, that is a priest's tonsure."

"Hang the dog! O, that the sailors may but see

it, and put him over the quay head. I've a half mind to go and do it myself."

"My dear Amyas," said Frank, laying two fingers on his arm, "these men, whosoever they are, are the guests of our uncle, and therefore the guests of our family. Ham gained little by publishing Noah's shame; neither shall we, by publishing our uncle's."

"Murrain on you, old Franky, you never let a man speak his mind, and shame the devil."

"I have lived long enough in courts, old Amyas, without a murrain on you, to have found out first, that it is not so easy to shame the devil; and secondly, that it is better to outwit him; and the only way to do that, sweet chuck, is very often not to speak your mind at all. We will go down and visit them at Chapel in a day or two, and see if we cannot serve these reynards as the badger did the fox, when he found him in his hole, and could not get him out by evil savours."

"How then?"

"Stuck a sweet nosegay in the door, which turned Reynard's stomach at once; and so overcame evil with good."

"Well, thou art too good for this world, that's certain; so we will go home to breakfast. Those rogues are out of sight by now."

Nevertheless, Amyas was not proof against the temptation of going over to the inn-door, and asking who were the gentlemen who went with Mr. Leigh.

"Gentlemen of Wales," said the ostler, "who came last night in a pinnace from Milford-haven,

and their names, Mr. Morgan Evans and Mr. Evan Morgans."

"Mr. Judas Iscariot and Mr. Iscariot Judas," said Amyas between his teeth, and then observed aloud, "that the Welsh gentlemen seemed rather poor horsemen."

"So I said to Mr. Leigh's groom, your worship. But he says that those parts be so uncommon rough and mountainous, that the poor gentlemen, you see, being enforced to hunt on foot, have no such opportunities as young gentlemen hereabout, like your worship; whom God preserve, and send a virtuous lady, and one worthy of you."

"Thou hast a villanously glib tongue, fellow!" said Amyas, who was thoroughly out of humour; "and a sneaking down visage too, when I come to look at you. I doubt but you are a Papist too, I do!"

"Well, sir! and what if I am! I trust I don't break the Queen's laws by that. If I don't attend Northam church, I pay my month's shilling for the use of the poor, as the Act directs; and beyond that, neither you nor any man dare demand of me."

"Dare! Act directs! You rascally lawyer, you! and whence does an ostler like you get your shilling to pay withal? Answer me." The examinate found it so difficult to answer the question, that he suddenly became afflicted with deafness.

"Do you hear?" roared Amyas, catching at him with his lion's paw.

"Yes, missus; anon, anon, missus!" quoth he to an imaginary landlady inside, and twisting under

Amyas's hand like an eel, vanished into the house, while Frank got the hot-headed youth away.

"What a plague is one to do, then? That fellow was a Papist spy!"

"Of course he was!" said Frank.

"Then, what is one to do, if the whole country is full of them?"

"Not to make fools of ourselves about them; and so leave them to make fools of themselves."

"That's all very fine: but—well, I shall remember the villain's face if I see him again."

"There is no harm in that," said Frank.

"Glad you think so."

"Don't quarrel with me, Amyas, the first day."

"Quarrel with thee, my darling old fellow! I had sooner kiss the dust off thy feet, if I were worthy of it. So now away home; my inside cries cupboard."

In the meanwhile Messrs. Evans and Morgans were riding away, as fast as the rough by-lanes would let them, along the fresh coast of the bay, steering carefully clear of Northam town on the one hand, and on the other, of Portledge, where dwelt that most Protestant justice of the peace, Mr. Coffin. And it was well for them that neither Amyas Leigh, or indeed any other loyal Englishman, was by when they entered, as they shortly did, the lonely woods which stretch along the southern wall of the bay. For there Eustace Leigh pulled up short; and both he and his groom, leaping from their horses, knelt down humbly in the wet grass, and implored the blessing of the two valiant gentlemen of Wales, who, having graciously bestowed

it with three fingers apiece, became thenceforth no longer Morgan Evans and Evan Morgans, Welshmen and gentlemen; but Father Parsons and Father Campian, Jesuits, and gentlemen in no sense in which that word is applied in this book.

After a few minutes, the party were again in motion, ambling steadily and cautiously along the high table-land, towards Moorwinstow in the west; while beneath them on the right, at the mouth of rich-wooded glens, opened vistas of the bright blue bay, and beyond it the sandhills of Braunton, and the ragged rocks of Morte; while far away to the north and west the lonely isle of Lundy hung like a soft grey cloud.

But they were not destined to reach their point as peaceably as they could have wished. For just as they got opposite Clovelly Dike, the huge old Roman encampment which stands about mid-way in their journey, they heard a halloo from the valley below, answered by a fainter one far ahead. At which, like a couple of rogues (as indeed they were), Father Campian and Father Parsons looked at each other, and then both stared round at the wild, desolate, open pasture (for the country was then all unenclosed), and the great dark furze-grown banks above their heads; and Campian remarked gently to Parsons, that this was a very dreary spot, and likely enough for robbers.

"A likelier spot for us, Father," said Eustace, punning. "The old Romans knew what they were about when they put their legions up aloft here to overlook land and sea for miles away; and we may

thank them some day for their leavings. The banks are all sound; there is plenty of good water inside; and" (added he in Latin), "in case our Spanish friends —you understand?"

"*Pauca verba*, my son!" said Campian: but as he spoke, up from the ditch close beside him, as if rising out of the earth, burst through the furze-bushes an armed cavalier.

"Pardon, gentlemen!" shouted he, as the Jesuit and his horse recoiled against the groom. Stand, for your lives!"

"*Mater cœlorum!*" moaned Campian: while Parsons, who, as all the world knows, was a blustering bully enough (at least with his tongue), asked: "What a murrain right had he to stop honest folks on the Queen's highway?" confirming the same with a mighty oath, which he set down as *peccatum veniale*, on account of the sudden necessity; nay, indeed *fraus pia*, as proper to support the character of that valiant gentleman of Wales, Mr. Evan Morgans. But the horseman, taking no notice of his hint, dashed across the nose of Eustace Leigh's horse, with a "Hillo, old lad! where ridest so early?" and peering down for a moment into the ruts of the narrow track-way, struck spurs into his horse, shouting, "A fresh slot! right away for Hartland! Forward, gentlemen all! follow, follow, follow!"

"Who is this roysterer?" asked Parsons, loftily.

"Will Cary, of Clovelly; an awful heretic: and here come more behind."

And as he spoke, four or five more mounted gallants plunged in and out of the great dikes, and thundered

on behind the party; whose horses, quite understanding what game was up, burst into full gallop, neighing and squealing; and in another minute the hapless Jesuits were hurling along over moor and moss after a "hart of grease."

Parsons, who, though a vulgar bully, was no coward, supported the character of Mr. Evan Morgans well enough; and he would have really enjoyed himself, had he not been in agonies of fear lest those precious saddle-bags in front of him should break from their lashings, and rolling to the earth, expose to the hoofs of heretic horses, perhaps to the gaze of heretic eyes, such a cargo of bulls, dispensations, secret correspondences, seditious tracts, and so forth, that at the very thought of their being seen, his head felt loose upon his shoulders. But the future martyr behind him, Mr. Morgan Evans, gave himself up at once to abject despair, and as he bumped and rolled along, sought vainly for comfort in professional ejaculations in the Latin tongue.

"*Mater intemerata! Eripe me e*—Ugh! I am down! *Adhæsit pavimento venter!*—No! I am not! *Et dilectum tuum e potestate canis*—Ah? *Audisti me inter cornua unicornium!*—Put this, too, down in—ugh!—thy account in favour of my poor—oh, sharpness of this saddle! Oh whither, barbarous islanders!"

Now riding on his quarter, not in the rough trackway like a cockney, but through the soft heather like a sportsman, was a very gallant knight whom we all know well by this time, Richard Grenvile by name; who had made Mr. Cary and the rest his guests the

night before, and then ridden out with them at five o'clock that morning, after the wholesome early ways of the time, to rouse a well-known stag in the glens at Buckish, by help of Mr. Coffin's hounds from Portledge. Who being as good a Latiner as Campian's self, and overhearing both the scraps of psalm and "the barbarous islanders," pushed his horse alongside of Mr. Eustace Leigh, and at the first check said, with two low bows towards the two strangers—

"I hope Mr. Leigh will do me the honour of introducing me to his guests. I should be sorry, and Mr. Cary also, that any gentle strangers should become neighbours of ours, even for a day, without our knowing who they are who honour our western Thule with a visit; and showing them ourselves all due requital for the compliment of their presence."

After which, the only thing which poor Eustace could do (especially as it was spoken loud enough for all bystanders), was to introduce in due form Mr. Evan Morgans and Mr. Morgan Evans, who, hearing the name, and what was worse, seeing the terrible face with its quiet searching eye, felt like a brace of partridge-poults cowering in the stubble, with a hawk hanging ten feet over their heads.

"Gentlemen," said Sir Richard blandly, cap in hand; "I fear that your mails must have been somewhat in your way in this unexpected gallop. If you will permit my groom, who is behind, to disencumber you of them and carry them to Chapel, you will both confer an honour on me, and be enabled yourselves to see the mort more pleasantly."

A twinkle of fun, in spite of all his efforts, played about good Sir Richard's eye as he gave this searching hint. The two Welsh gentlemen stammered out clumsy thanks; and pleading great haste and fatigue from a long journey, contrived to fall to the rear, and vanish with their guides, as soon as the slot had been recovered.

"Will!" said Sir Richard, pushing alongside of young Cary.

"Your worship?"

"Jesuits, Will!"

"May the father of lies fly away with them over the nearest cliff!"

"He will not do that while this Irish trouble is about. Those fellows are come to practise here for Saunders and Desmond."

"Perhaps they have a consecrated banner in their bag, the scoundrels! Shall I and young Coffin on and stop them? Hard if the honest men may not rob the thieves once in a way."

"No; give the devil rope, and he will hang himself. Keep thy tongue at home, and thine eyes too, Will."

"How then?"

"Let Clovelly beach be watched night and day like any mousehole. No one can land round Harty point with these south-westers. Stop every fellow who has the ghost of an Irish brogue, come he in or go he out, and send him over to me."

"Some one should guard Bude haven, sir."

"Leave that to me. Now then, forward, gentlemen all, or the stag will take the sea at the Abbey."

And on they crashed down the Hartland glens, through the oak-scrub and the great crown-ferns; and the baying of the slow-hound and the tantaras of the horn died away farther and fainter toward the blue Atlantic, while the conspirators, with lightened hearts, pricked fast across Bursdon upon their evil errand. But Eustace Leigh had other thoughts and other cares than the safety of his father's two mysterious guests, important as that was in his eyes; for he was one of the many who had drunk in sweet poison (though in his case it could hardly be called sweet) from the magic glances of the Rose of Torridge. He had seen her in the town, and for the first time in his life fallen utterly in love; and now that she had come down close to his father's house, he looked on her as a lamb fallen unawares into the jaws of the greedy wolf, which he felt himself to be. For Eustace's love had little or nothing of chivalry, self-sacrifice, or purity in it; those were virtues which were not taught at Rheims. Careful as the Jesuits were over the practical morality of their pupils, this severe restraint had little effect in producing real habits of self-control. What little Eustace had learnt of women from them, was as base and vulgar as the rest of their teaching. What could it be else, if instilled by men educated in the schools of Italy and France, in the age which produced the foul novels of Cinthio and Bandello, and compelled Rabelais, in order to escape the rack and stake, to hide the light of his great wisdom, not beneath a bushel, but beneath a dunghill; the age in which the Romish Church had

made marriage a legalised tyranny, and the laity, by a natural and pardonable revulsion, had exalted adultery into a virtue and a science? That all love was lust; that all women had their price; that profligacy, though an ecclesiastical sin, was so pardonable, if not necessary, as to be hardly a moral sin, were notions which Eustace must needs have gathered from the hints of his preceptors; for their written works bear to this day fullest and foulest testimony that such was their opinion; and that their conception of the relation of the sexes was really not a whit higher than that of the profligate laity who confessed to them. He longed to marry Rose Salterne, with a wild selfish fury; but only that he might be able to claim her as his own property, and keep all others from her. Of her as a co-equal and ennobling helpmate; as one in whose honour, glory, growth of heart and soul, his own were inextricably wrapt up, he had never dreamed. Marriage would prevent God from being angry with that, with which otherwise He might be angry; and therefore the sanction of the Church was the more "probable and safe" course. But as yet his suit was in very embryo. He could not even tell whether Rose knew of his love; and he wasted miserable hours in maddening thoughts, and tost all night upon his sleepless bed, and rose next morning fierce and pale, to invent fresh excuses for going over to her uncle's house, and lingering about the fruit which he dared not snatch.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TWO WAYS OF BEING CROST IN LOVE.

"I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more."—LOVELACE.

AND what all this while has become of the fair breaker of so many hearts, to whom I have not yet even introduced my readers?

She was sitting in the little farm-house beside the mill, buried in the green depths of the Valley of Combe, half-way between Stow and Chapel, sulking as much as her sweet nature would let her, at being thus shut out from all the grand doings at Bideford, and forced to keep a Martinmas Lent in that far western glen. So lonely was she, in fact, that though she regarded Eustace Leigh with somewhat of aversion, and (being a good Protestant) with a great deal of suspicion, she could not find it in her heart to avoid a chat with him whenever he came down to the farm and to its mill, which he contrived to do, on I know not what would-be errand, almost every day. Her uncle and aunt at first looked stiff enough at these visits, and the latter took care always to make a third in every conversation; but still Mr. Leigh was a gentleman's son, and it would not do to be rude to a neighbouring squire and a good customer; and Rose was

the rich man's daughter, and they poor cousins, so it would not do either to quarrel with her; and besides, the pretty maid, half by wilfulness, and half by her sweet winning tricks, generally contrived to get her own way wheresoever she went; and she herself had been wise enough to beg her aunt never to leave them alone,—for she "could not a-bear the sight of Mr. Eustace, only she must have some one to talk with down here." On which her aunt considered, that she herself was but a simple country-woman; and that townsfolks' ways of course must be very different from hers; and that people knew their own business best; and so forth, and let things go on their own way. Eustace, in the meanwhile, who knew well that the difference in creed between him and Rose was likely to be the very hardest obstacle in the way of his love, took care to keep his private opinions well in the background; and instead of trying to convert the folk at the mill, daily bought milk or flour from them, and gave it away to the old women in Moorwinstow (who agreed that after all, for a Papist, he was a godly young man enough); and at last, having taken counsel with Campian and Parsons on certain political plots then on foot, came with them to the conclusion that they would all three go to Church the next Sunday. Where Messrs. Evan Morgans and Morgan Evans, having crammed up the rubrics beforehand, behaved themselves in a most orthodox and unexceptionable manner; as did also poor Eustace, to the great wonder of all good folks, and then went home flattering himself that he had taken in parson, clerk, and

people; not knowing in his simple unsimplicity, and cunning foolishness, that each good wife in the parish was saying to the other, "He turned Protestant? The devil turned monk! He's only after Mistress Salterne, the young hypocrite."

But if the two Jesuits found it expedient, for the holy cause in which they were embarked, to reconcile themselves outwardly to the powers that were, they were none the less busy in private in plotting their overthrow.

Ever since April last they had been playing at hide-and-seek through the length and breadth of England, and now they were only lying quiet till expected news from Ireland should give them their cue, and a great "rising of the west" should sweep from her throne, that stiff-necked, persecuting, excommunicate, reprobate, illegitimate, and profligate usurper, who falsely called herself the Queen of England.

For they had as stoutly persuaded themselves in those days, as they have in these (with a real Baconian contempt of the results of sensible experience), that the heart of England was really with them, and that the British nation was on the point of returning to the bosom of the Catholic Church, and giving up Elizabeth to be led in chains to the feet of the rightful Lord of Creation, the Old Man of the Seven Hills. And this fair hope which has been skipping just in front of them for centuries, always a step farther off, like the place where the rainbow touches the ground, they used to announce at times, in language which terrified old Mr. Leigh. One day, indeed, as Eustace

entered his father's private room, after his usual visit to the mill, he could hear voices high in dispute; Parsons as usual, blustering; Mr. Leigh peevishly deprecating, and Campian, who was really the sweetest-natured of men, trying to pour oil on the troubled waters. Whereat Eustace (for the good of the cause, of course) stopped outside and listened.

"My excellent sir," said Mr. Leigh, "does not your very presence here show how I am affected toward the holy cause of the Catholic faith? But I cannot in the meanwhile forget that I am an Englishman."

"And what is England?" said Parsons: "A heretic and schismatic Babylon, whereof it is written, 'Come out of her, my people, lest you be partaker of her plagues.' Yea, what is a country? An arbitrary division of territory by the princes of this world, who are nought, and come to nought. They are created by the people's will; their existence depends on the sanction of him to whom all power is given in heaven and earth—our holy father the Pope. Take away the latter, and what is a king?—the people who have made him may unmake him."

"My dear sir, recollect that I have sworn allegiance to Queen Elizabeth!"

"Yes, sir, you have, sir; and, as I have shown at large in my writings, you were absolved from that allegiance from the moment that the bull of Pius the Fifth declared her a heretic and excommunicate, and thereby to have forfeited all dominion whatsover. I tell you, sir, what I thought you should have known

already, that since the year 1569, England has had no Queen, no magistrates, no laws, no lawful authority whatsoever; and that to own allegiance to any English magistrate, sir, or to plead in an English court of law, is to disobey the apostolic precept, 'How dare you go to law before the unbelievers?' I tell you, sir, rebellion is now not merely permitted, it is a duty."

"Take care, sir; for God's sake, take care!" said Mr. Leigh. "Right or wrong, I cannot have such language used in my house. For the sake of my wife and children, I cannot!"

"My dear brother Parsons, deal more gently with the flock," interposed Campian. "Your opinion, though probable, as I well know, in the eyes of most of our order, is hardly safe enough here; the opposite is at least so safe that Mr. Leigh may well excuse his conscience for accepting it. After all, are we not sent hither to proclaim this very thing, and to relieve the souls of good Catholics from a burden which has seemed to them too heavy?"

"Yes," said Parsons, half sulkily, "to allow all Balaams who will to sacrifice to Baal, while they call themselves by the name of the Lord."

"My dear brother, have I not often reminded you that Naaman was allowed to bow himself in the house of Rimmon? And can we therefore complain of the office to which the Holy Father has appointed us, to declare to such as Mr. Leigh his especial grace, by which the bull of Pius the Fifth (on whose soul God have mercy!) shall henceforth bind the Queen and the heretics only; but in no ways the Catholics, at

least as long as the present tyranny prevents the pious purposes of the bull?"

"Be it so, sir; be it so. Only observe this, Mr. Leigh, that our brother Campain confesses this to be a tyranny. Observe, sir, that the bull does still bind the so-called Queen, and that she and her magistrates are still none the less usurpers, nonentities, and shadows of a shade. And observe this, sir, that when that which is lawful is excused to the weak, it remains no less lawful to the strong. The seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal did not slay his priests; but Elijah did, and won to himself a good reward. And if the rest of the children of Israel sinned not in not slaying Eglon, yet Ehud's deed was none the less justified by all laws human and divine."

"For heaven's sake, do not talk so, sir! or I must leave the room. What have I to do with Ehud and Eglon, and slaughters, and tyrannies? Our Queen is a very good Queen, if Heaven would but grant her repentance, and turn her to the true faith. I have never been troubled about religion, nor any one else that I know of in the west country."

"You forget Mr. Trudgeon of Launceston, father, and poor Father Mayne," interposed Eustace, who had by this time slipped in; and Campian added softly—

"Yes, your West of England also has been honoured by its martyrs, as well as my London by the precious blood of Story."

"What, young malapert?" cried poor Leigh, facing round upon his son, glad to find any one on whom he might vent his ill-humour; "are you, too, against me,

with a murrain on you? And pray, what the devil brought Cuthbert Mayne to the gallows, and turned Mr. Trudgeon (he was always a foolish hot-head) out of house and home, but just such treasonable talk as Mr. Parsons must needs hold in my house, to make a beggar of me and my children, as he will before he has done.

"The blessed Virgin forbid!" said Campian.

"The blessed Virgin forbid? But you must help her to forbid it, Mr. Campian. We should never have had the law of 1571, against bulls, and Agnus Deis, and blessed grains, if the Pope's bull of 1569 had not made them matter of treason, by preventing a poor creature's saving his soul in the true Church without putting his neck into a halter by denying the Queen's authority."

"What, sir?" almost roared Parsons, "do you dare to speak evil of the edicts of the Vicar of Christ?"

"I? No. I didn't. Who says I did? All I meant was, I am sure—Mr. Campian, you are a reasonable man, speak for me."

"Mr. Leigh only meant, I am sure, that the Holy Father's prudent intentions have been so far defeated by the perverseness and invincible misunderstanding of the heretics, that that which was in itself meant for the good of the oppressed English Catholics has been perverted to their harm."

"And thus, reverend sir," said Eustace, glad to get into his father's good graces again, "my father attaches blame, not to the Pope—Heaven forbid!—but to the pravity of his enemies."

"And it is for this very reason," said Campian, "that we have brought with us the present merciful explanation of the bull."

"I'll tell you what, gentlemen," said Mr. Leigh, who, like other weak men, grew in valour as his opponent seemed inclined to make peace, "I don't think the declaration was needed. After the new law of 1571 was made, it was never put in force till Mayne and Trudgeon made fools of themselves, and that was full six years. There were a few offenders, they say, who were brought up and admonished, and let go; but even that did not happen down here, and need not happen now, unless you put my son here (for you shall never put me, I warrant you) upon some deed which had better be left alone, and so bring us all to shame."

"Your son, sir, if not openly vowed to God, has, I hope, a due sense of that inward vocation which we have seen in him, and reverences his spiritual fathers too well to listen to the temptations of his earthly father."

"What, sir, will you teach my son to disobey me?"

"Your son is ours also, sir. This is strange language in one who owes a debt to the Church, which it was charitably fancied he meant to pay in the person of his child."

These last words touched poor Mr. Leigh in a sore point, and breaking all bounds, he swore roundly at Parsons, who stood foaming with rage.

"A plague upon you, sir, and a black assizes for

you, for you will come to the gallows yet! Do you mean to taunt me in my own house with that Hartland land? You had better go back and ask those who sent you, where the dispensation to hold the land is, which they promised to get me years ago, and have gone on putting me off, till they have got my money, and my son, and my conscience, and I vow before all the saints, seem now to want my head over and above. God help me!"—and the poor man's eyes fairly filled with tears.

Now was Eustace's turn to be roused; for, after all, he was an Englishman and a gentleman; and he said kindly enough, but firmly—

"Courage, my dearest father. Remember that I am still your son, and not a Jesuit yet; and whether I ever become one, I promise you, will depend mainly on the treatment which you meet with at the hands of these reverend gentlemen, for whom I, as having brought them hither, must consider myself as surety to you."

If a powder-barrel had exploded in the Jesuits' faces, they could not have been more amazed. Campian looked blank at Parsons, and Parsons at Campian; till the stouter-hearted of the two, recovering his breath at last—

"Sir! do you know, sir, the curse pronounced on those who, after putting their hand to the plough, look back?"

Eustace was one of those impulsive men, with a lack of moral courage, who dare raise the devil, but never dare fight him after he has been raised; and

he now tried to pass off his speech by winking and making signs in the direction of his father, as much as to say that he was only trying to quiet the old man's fears. But Campian was too frightened, Parsons too angry, to take his hints: and he had to carry his part through.

"All I read is, Father Parsons, that such are not fit for the kingdom of God; of which high honour I have for some time past felt myself unworthy. I have much doubt just now as to my vocation; and in the meanwhile have not forgotten that I am a citizen of a free country." And so saying, he took his father's arm, and walked out.

His last words had hit the Jesuits hard. They had put the poor cobweb-spinners in mind of the humiliating fact, which they have had thrust on them daily from that time till now, and yet have never learnt the lesson, that all their scholastic cunning, plotting, intriguing, bulls, pardons, indulgences, and the rest of it, are, on this side the Channel, a mere enchanter's cloud-castle and Fata Morgana, which vanishes into empty air by one touch of that magic wand, the constable's staff. "A citizen of a free country!"—there was the rub; and they looked at each other in more utter perplexity than ever. At last Parsons spoke.

"There's a woman in the wind. I'll lay my life on it. I saw him blush up crimson yesterday, when his mother asked him whether some Rose Salterne or other was still in the neighbourhood."

"A woman? Well, the spirit may be willing,

though the flesh be weak. We will enquire into this. The youth may do us good service as a layman; and if anything should happen to his elder brother (whom the saints protect!) he is heir to some wealth. In the meanwhile, our dear brother Parsons will perhaps see the expediency of altering our tactics somewhat while we are here."

And thereupon a long conversation began between the two, who had been sent together, after the wise method of their order, in obedience to the precept, "Two are better than one," in order that Campian might restrain Parsons's vehemence, and Parsons spur on Campian's gentleness, and so each act as the supplement of the other, and each also, it must be confessed, gave advice pretty nearly contradictory to his fellow's if occasion should require, "without the danger," as their writers have it, "of seeming changeable and inconsistent."

The upshot of this conversation was, that in a day or two (during which time Mr. Leigh and Eustace also had made the *amende honorable*, and matters went smoothly enough) Father Campian asked Father Francis the household chaplain to allow him, as an especial favour, to hear Eustace's usual confession on the ensuing Friday.

Poor Father Francis dared not refuse so great a man; and assented with an inward groan, knowing well that the intent was to worm out some family secrets, whereby his power would be diminished, and the Jesuits' increased. For the regular priesthood and the Jesuits throughout England were toward

each other in a state of armed neutrality, which wanted but little at any moment to become open war, as it did in James the First's time, when those meek missionaries, by their gentle moral tortures, literally hunted to death the poor Popish bishop of Hippopotamus (that is to say, London) for the time being.

However, Campian heard Eustace's confession; and by putting to him such questions as may be easily conceived by those who know anything about the confessional, discovered satisfactorily enough, that he was what Campian would have called "in love:" though I should question much the propriety of the term as applied to any facts which poor prurient Campian discovered, or indeed knew how to discover, seeing that a swine has no eye for pearls. But he had found out enough: he smiled, and set to work next vigorously to discover who the lady might be.

If he had frankly said to Eustace, "I feel for you; and if your desires are reasonable, or lawful, or possible, I will help you with all my heart and soul," he might have had the young man's secret heart, and saved himself an hour's trouble; but, of course, he took instinctively the crooked and suspicious method, expected to find the case the worst possible,—as a man was bound to do who had been trained to take the lowest possible view of human nature, and to consider the basest motives as the mainspring of all human action,—and began his moral torture accordingly by a series of delicate questions, which poor Eustace dodged in every possible way, though he knew

that the good father was too cunning for him, and that he must give in at last. Nevertheless, like a rabbit who runs squealing round and round before the weasel, into whose jaws it knows that it must jump at last by force of fascination, he parried and parried, and pretended to be stupid, and surprised, and honourably scrupulous, and even angry; while every question as to her being married or single, Catholic or heretic, English or foreign, brought his tormentor a step nearer the goal. At last, when Campian, finding the business not such a very bad one, had asked something about her worldly wealth, Eustace saw a door of escape and sprang at it.

"Even if she be a heretic, she is heiress to one of the wealthiest merchants in Devon."

"Ah!" said Campian, thoughtfully. "And she is but eighteen, you say?"

"Only eighteen."

"Ah! well, my son, there is time. She may be reconciled to the Church: or you may change."

"I shall die first."

"Ah, poor lad! Well; she may be reconciled, and her wealth may be of use to the cause of heaven."

"And it shall be of use. Only absolve me, and let me be at peace. Let me have but her," he cried piteously. "I do not want her wealth,—not I! Let me have but her, and that but for one year, one month, one day!—and all the rest,—money, fame, talents, yea, my life itself, hers if it be needed,—are at the service of Holy Church. Ay, I shall glory in showing my devotion by some special sacrifice,—some desperate

deed. Prove me now, and see what there is I will not do!"

And so Eustace was absolved; after which Campian added,—

"This is indeed well, my son; for there is a thing to be done now, but it may be at the risk of life."

"Prove me!" cried Eustace impatiently.

"Here is a letter which was brought me last night; no matter from whence; you can understand it better than I, and I longed to have shown it you, but that I feared my son had become——"

"You feared wrongly, then, my dear Father Campian."

So Campian translated to him the cipher of the letter.

"This to Evan Morgans, gentleman, at Mr. Leigh's house in Moorwinstow, Devonshire. News may be had by one who will go to the shore of Clovelly, any evening after the 25th of November, at dead low-tide, and there watch for a boat, rowed by one with a red beard, and a Portugal by his speech. If he be asked, 'How many?' he will answer, 'Eight hundred and one.' Take his letters and read them. If the shore be watched, let him who comes show a light three times in a safe place under the cliff above the town; below is dangerous landing. Farewell, and expect great things!"

"I will go," said Eustace; "to-morrow is the 25th, and I know a sure and easy place. Your friend seems to know these shores well."

"Ah! what is it we do not know?" said Campian, with a mysterious smile. "And now?"

"And now, to prove to you how I trust to you, you shall come with me, and see this—the lady of whom I spoke, and judge for yourself whether my fault is not a venial one."

"Ah, my son, have I not absolved you already? What have I to do with fair faces? Nevertheless, I will come, both to show you that I trust you, and it may be to help towards reclaiming a heretic, and saving a lost soul: who knows?"

So the two set out together; and, as it was appointed, they had just got to the top of the hill between Chapel and Stow mill, when up the lane came none other than Mistress Rose Salterne herself, in all the glories of a new scarlet hood, from under which her large dark languid eyes gleamed soft lightnings through poor Eustace's heart and marrow. Up to them she tripped on delicate ankles and tiny feet, tall, lithe, and graceful, a true West-country lass; and as she passed them with a pretty blush and courtesy, even Campian looked back at the fair innocent creature, whose long dark curls, after the then country fashion, rolled down from beneath the hood below her waist, entangling the soul of Eustace Leigh within their glossy nets.

"There!" whispered he, trembling from head to foot. "Can you excuse me now?"

"I had excused you long ago," said the kind-hearted father. "Alas, that so much fair red and white should have been created only as a feast for worms!"

"A feast for gods you mean!" cried Eustace, on whose common sense the naïve absurdity of the last

speech struck keenly; and then, as if to escape the scolding which he deserved for his heathenry,—

"Will you let me return for a moment? I will follow you: let me go!"

Campian saw that it was of no use to say no, and nodded. Eustace darted from his side, and running across a field, met Rose full at the next turn of the road.

She started, and gave a pretty little shriek.

"Mr Leigh! I thought you had gone forward."

"I came back to speak to you, Rose—Mistress Salterne, I mean."

"To me?"

"To you I must speak, tell you all, or die!" And he pressed up close to her. She shrank back somewhat frightened.

"Do not stir; do not go, I implore you! Rose, only hear me!" And fiercely and passionately seizing her by the hand, he poured out the whole story of his love, heaping her with every fantastic epithet of admiration which he could devise.

There was little, perhaps, of all his words which Rose had not heard many a time before; but there was a quiver in his voice, and a fire in his eye, from which she shrank by instinct.

"Let me go!" she said; "you are too rough, sir!"

"Ay!" he said, seizing now both her hands, "rougher, perhaps, than the gay gallants of Bideford, who serenade you, and write sonnets to you, and send you posies. Rougher, but more loving, Rose! Do not turn away! I shall die if you take your eyes off

me! Tell me,—tell me, now here—this moment—before we part—if I may love you!"

"Go away!" she answered, struggling, and bursting into tears. "This is too rude. If I am but a merchant's daughter, I am God's child. Remember that I am alone. Leave me; go! or I will call for help!"

Eustace had heard or read somewhere, that such expressions in a woman's mouth were mere *façons de parler*, and on the whole signs that she had no objection to be alone, and did not intend to call for help; and he only grasped her hands the more fiercely, and looked into her face with keen and hungry eyes; but she was in earnest nevertheless, and a loud shriek made him aware that, if he wished to save his own good name, he must go: but there was one question, for an answer to which he would risk his very life.

"Yes, proud woman! I thought so! Some one of those gay gallants has been beforehand with me. Tell me who——"

But she broke from him, and passed him, and fled down the lane.

"Mark it!" cried he, after her. "You shall rue the day when you despised Eustace Leigh! Mark it, proud beauty!" And he turned back to join Campian, who stood in some trepidation.

"You have not hurt the maiden, my son? I thought I heard a scream."

"Hurt her! No. Would God that she were dead, nevertheless, and I by her! Say no more to me, father. We will home." Even Campian knew enough

of the world to guess what had happened, and they both hurried home in silence.

And so Eustace Leigh played his move, and lost it.

Poor little Rose, having run nearly to Chapel, stopped for very shame, and walked quietly by the cottages which stood opposite the gate, and then turned up the lane towards Moorwinstow village, whither she was bound. But on second thoughts, she felt herself so "red and flustered," that she was afraid of going into the village, for fear (as she said to herself) of making people talk, and so, turning into a by-path, struck away toward the cliffs, to cool her blushes in the sea-breeze. And there finding a quiet grassy nook beneath the crest of the rocks, she sat down on the turf, and fell into a great meditation.

Rose Salterne was a thorough specimen of a West-coast maiden, full of passionate impulsive affections, and wild dreamy imaginations, a fit subject, as the North-Devon women are still, for all romantic and gentle superstitions. Left early without a mother's care, she had fed her fancy upon the legends and ballads of her native land, till she believed—what did she not believe?—of mermaids and pixies, charms and witches, dreams and omens, and all that world of magic in which most of the countrywomen, and countrymen too, believed firmly enough but twenty years ago. Then her father's house was seldom without some merchant, or sea-captain from foreign parts, who, like Othello, had his tales of—

> "Antres vast, and deserts idle,
> Of rough quarries, rocks, and hills whose heads reach heaven."

And,—

> "And of the cannibals that each other eat,
> The anthropophagi, and men whose heads
> Do grow beneath their shoulders."

All which tales, she, like Desdemona, devoured with greedy ears, whenever she could "the house affairs with haste despatch." And when these failed, there was still boundless store of wonders open to her in old romances which were then to be found in every English house of the better class. The Legend of King Arthur, Florice and Blancheflour, Sir Ysumbras, Sir Guy of Warwick, Palamon and Arcite, and the Romaunt of the Rose, were with her text-books and canonical authorities. And lucky it was, perhaps, for her, that Sidney's Arcadia was still in petto, or Mr. Frank (who had already seen the first book or two in manuscript, and extolled it above all books past, present, or to come) would have surely brought a copy down for Rose, and thereby have turned her poor little flighty brains upside down for ever. And with her head full of these, it was no wonder if she had likened herself of late more than once to some of those peerless princesses of old, for whose fair hand paladins and kaisers thundered against each other in tilted field; and perhaps she would not have been sorry (provided, of course, no one was killed) if duels and passages of arms in honour of her, as her father reasonably dreaded, had actually taken place.

For Rose was not only well aware that she was wooed, but found the said wooing (and little shame to her) a very pleasant process. Not that she had any

wish to break hearts: she did not break her heart for any of her admirers, and why should they break theirs for her? They were all very charming, each in his way (the gentlemen, at least; for she had long since learnt to turn up her nose at merchants and burghers); but one of them was not so very much better than the other.

Of course, Mr. Frank Leigh was the most charming; but then, as a courtier and squire of dames, he had never given her a sign of real love, nothing but sonnets and compliments, and there was no trusting such things from a gallant, who was said (though, by the by, most scandalously) to have a lady love at Milan, and another at Vienna, and half-a-dozen in the Court, and half-a-dozen more in the city.

And very charming was Mr. William Cary, with his quips and his jests, and his galliards and lavoltas; over and above his rich inheritance; but then, charming also Mr. Coffin of Portledge, though he were a little proud and stately; but which of the two should she choose? It would be very pleasant to be mistress of Clovelly Court; but just as pleasant to find herself lady of Portledge, where the Coffins had lived ever since Noah's flood (if, indeed, they had not merely returned thither after that temporary displacement), and to bring her wealth into a family which was as proud of its antiquity as any nobleman in Devon, and might have made a fourth to that famous trio of Devonshire Cs, of which it is written,—

> "Crocker, Cruwys, and Copplestone,
> When the Conqueror came were all at home."

And Mr. Hugh Fortescue, too—people said that he was certain to become a great soldier—perhaps as great as his brother Arthur — and that would be pleasant enough, too, though he was but the younger son of an innumerable family: but then, so was Amyas Leigh. Ah, poor Amyas! Her girl's fancy for him had vanished, or rather, perhaps, it was very much what it always had been, only that four or five more girl's fancies beside it had entered in, and kept it in due subjection. But still, she could not help thinking a good deal about him, and his voyage, and the reports of his great strength, and beauty, and valour, which had already reached her in that out-of-the-way corner; and though she was not in the least in love with him, she could not help hoping that he had at least (to put her pretty little thought in the mildest shape) not altogether forgotten her; and was hungering, too, with all her fancy, to give him no peace till he had told her all the wonderful things which he had seen and done in this ever-memorable voyage. So that altogether, it was no wonder, if in her last night's dream the figure of Amyas had been even more forward and troublesome than that of Frank or the rest.

But, moreover, another figure had been forward and troublesome enough in last night's sleep-world; and forward and troublesome enough, too, now in to-day's waking-world, namely, Eustace, the rejected. How strange that she should have dreamt of him the night before! and dreamt, too, of his fighting with Mr. Frank and Mr. Amyas! It must be a warning—

see, she had met him the very next day in this strange way; so the first half of her dream had come true; and after what had past, she only had to breathe a whisper, and the second part of the dream would come true also. If she wished for a passage of arms in her own honour, she could easily enough compass one: not that she would do it for worlds! And after all, though Mr. Eustace had been very rude and naughty, yet still it was not his own fault; he could not help being in love with her. And—and, in short, the poor little maid felt herself one of the most important personages on earth, with all the cares (or hearts) of the country in her keeping, and as much perplexed with matters of weight as ever was any Cleophila, or Dianeme, Fiordispina or Flourdeluce, in verse run tame, or prose run mad.

Poor little Rose! Had she but had a mother! But she was to learn her lesson, such as it was, in another school. She was too shy (too proud perhaps) to tell her aunt her mighty troubles; but a counsellor she must have; and after sitting with her head in her hands, for half-an-hour or more, she arose suddenly, and started off along the cliffs towards Marsland. She would go and see Lucy Passmore, the white witch; Lucy knew everything; Lucy would tell her what to do; perhaps even whom to marry.

Lucy was a fat, jolly woman of fifty, with little pig-eyes, which twinkled like sparks of fire, and eyebrows which sloped upwards and outwards, like those of a satyr, as if she had been (as indeed she had) all her life looking out of the corners of her eyes. Her

qualifications as white witch were boundless cunning, equally boundless good nature, considerable knowledge of human weaknesses, some mesmeric power, some skill in "yarbs," as she called her simples, a firm faith in the virtue of her own incantations, and the faculty of holding her tongue. By dint of these she contrived to gain a fair share of money, and also (which she liked even better) of power, among the simple folk for many miles round. If a child was scalded, a tooth ached, a piece of silver was stolen, a heifer shrew-struck, a pig bewitched, a young damsel crost in love, Lucy was called in, and Lucy found a remedy, especially for the latter complaint. Now and then she found herself on ticklish ground, for the kind-heartedness which compelled her to help all distressed damsels out of a scrape, sometimes compelled her also to help them into one; whereon, enraged fathers called Lucy ugly names, and threatened to send her into Exeter gaol for a witch, and she smiled quietly, and hinted that if she were "like some that were ready to return evil for evil, such talk as that would bring no blessing on them that spoke it;" which being translated into plain English, meant, "If you trouble me, I will overlook (*i.e.* fascinate) you, and then your pigs will die, your horses stray, your cream turn sour, your barns be fired, your son have St. Vitus's dance, your daughter fits, and so on, woe on woe, till you are very probably starved to death in a ditch, by virtue of this terrible little eye of mine, at which, in spite of all your swearing and bullying, you know you are now shaking in your shoes for fear. So you had much better hold

your tongue, give me a drink of cider, and leave ill alone, lest you make it worse."

Not that Lucy ever proceeded to any such fearful extremities. On the contrary, her boast, and her belief too, was, that she was sent into the world to make poor souls as happy as she could, by lawful means, of course, if possible, but if not—why unlawful ones were better than none; for she "couldn't abear to see the poor creatures taking on; she was too, too tender-hearted." And so she was, to every one but her husband, a tall, simple-hearted rabbit-faced man, a good deal older than herself. Fully agreeing with Sir Richard Grenvile's great axiom, that he who cannot obey cannot rule, Lucy had been for the last five-and-twenty years training him pretty smartly to obey her, with the intention, it is to be charitably hoped, of letting him rule her in turn when his lesson was perfected. He bore his honours, however, meekly enough, having a boundless respect for his wife's wisdom, and a firm belief in her supernatural powers, and let her go her own way and earn her own money, while he got a little more in a truly pastoral method (not extinct yet along those lonely cliffs), by feeding a herd of some dozen donkeys and twenty goats. The donkeys fetched, at each low-tide, white shell-sand which was to be sold for manure to the neighbouring farmers; the goats furnished milk and "kiddy-pies;" and when there was neither milking nor sand-carrying to be done, old Will Passmore just sat under a sunny rock and watched the buck-goats rattle their horns together, thinking about nothing at

all, and taking very good care all the while neither to inquire nor to see who came in and out of his little cottage in the glen.

The Prophetess, when Rose approached her oracular cave, was seated on a tripod in front of the fire, distilling strong waters out of penny royal. But no sooner did her distinguished visitor appear at the hatch, than the still was left to take care of itself, and a clean apron and mutch having been slipt on, Lucy welcomed Rose with endless courtesies, and—

"Bless my dear soul alive, who ever would have thought to see the Rose of Torridge to my poor little place!"

Rose sat down: and then? How to begin was more than she knew, and she stayed silent a full five minutes, looking earnestly at the point of her shoe, till Lucy, who was an adept in such cases, thought it best to proceed to business at once, and save Rose the delicate operation of opening the ball herself; and so, in her own way, half fawning, half familiar—

"Well, my dear young lady, and what is it I can do for ye? For I guess you want a bit of old Lucy's help, eh? Though I'm most mazed to see ye here, surely. I should have supposed that pretty face could manage they sort of matters for itself. Eh?"

Rose, thus bluntly charged, confessed at once, and with many blushes and hesitations, made her soon understand that what she wanted was "To have her fortune told."

"Eh? Oh! I see. The pretty face has managed it a bit too well already, eh? Tu many o'mun, pure

fellows? Well, tain't every mayden has her pick and choose, like some I know of, as be blest in love by stars above. So you h'aint made up your mind, then?"

Rose shook her head.

"Ah—well," she went on, in a half bantering tone. "Not so asy, is it, then? One's gude for one thing, and one for another, eh? One has the blood, and another the money."

And so the "cunning woman" (as she truly was), talking half to herself, ran over all the names which she thought likely, peering at Rose all the while out of the corners of her foxy bright eyes, while Rose stirred the peat ashes steadfastly with the point of her little shoe, half angry, half ashamed, half frightened, to find that "the cunning woman" had guessed so well both her suitors and her thoughts about them, and tried to look unconcerned at each name as it came out.

"Well, well," said Lucy, who took nothing by her move, simply because there was nothing to take; "think over it—think over it, my dear life; and if you did set your mind on any one—why, then—then maybe I might help you to a sight of him."

"A sight of him?"

"His sperrit, dear life, his sperrit only, I mane. I 'udn't have no keeping company in my house, no, not for gowld untowld, I 'udn't; but the sperrit of mun—to see whether mun would be true or not, you'd like to know that, now, 'udn't you, my darling?"

Rose sighed, and stirred the ashes about vehemently.

"I must first know who it is to be. If you could show me that—now—"

"Oh, I can show ye that, tu, I can. Ben there's a way to 't, a sure way; but 'tis mortal cold for the time o' year, you zee."

"But what is it, then?" said Rose, who had in her heart been longing for something of that very kind, and had half made up her mind to ask for a charm.

"Why, you'm not afraid to goo into the say by night for a minute, are you? And to-morrow night would serve, too; 'twill be just low tide to midnight."

"If you would come with me, perhaps——"

"I'll come, I'll come, and stand within call, to be sure. Only do ye mind this, dear soul alive, not to goo telling a crumb about mun, noo, not for the world, or yu'll see nought at all, indeed, now. And beside, there's a noxious business grow'd up against me up to Chapel there; and I hear tell how Mr. Leigh saith I shall to Exeter gaol for a witch—did ye ever hear the likes?—because his groom Jan saith I overlooked mun—the Papist dog! And now never he nor th' ould Father Francis goo by me without a spetting, and saying of their Aves and Malificas—I do know what their Rooman Latin do mane, zo well as ever they, I du!—and a making o' their charms and incantations to their saints and idols! They be mortal feared of witches, they Papists, and mortal hard on 'em, even on a pure body like me, that doth a bit in the white way; 'case why you see, dear life," said she, with one of her humorous twinkles, "tu to a trade do never agree. Do ye try my bit of a charm, now; do ye!"

Rose could not resist the temptation; and between them both the charm was agreed on, and the next night was fixed for its trial, on the payment of certain current coins of the realm (for Lucy, of course, must live by her trade); and slipping a tester into the dame's hand as earnest, Rose went away home, and got there in safety.

But in the meanwhile, at the very hour that Eustace had been prosecuting his suit in the lane at Moorwinstow, a very different scene was being enacted in Mrs. Leigh's room at Burrough.

For the night before, Amyas, as he was going to bed, heard his brother Frank in the next room tune his lute, and then begin to sing. And both their windows being open, and only a thin partition between the chambers, Amyas's admiring ears came in for every word of the following canzonet, sung in that delicate and mellow tenor voice for which Frank was famed among all fair ladies:—

"Ah tyrant love, Megæra's serpents bearing,
Why thus requite my sighs with venom'd smart?
Ah, ruthless dove, the vulture's talons wearing,
Why flesh them, traitress, in this faithful heart?
Is this my meed? Must dragons' teeth alone
In Venus' lawns by lovers' hands be sown?

"Nay, gentlest Cupid; 'twas my pride undid me;
Nay, guiltless dove; by mine own wound I fell.
To worship, not to wed, Celestials bid me:
I dreamt to mate in heaven, and wake in hell;
For ever doom'd, Ixion-like, to reel
On mine own passions' ever-burning wheel."

At which the simple sailor sighed, and longed that

he could write such neat verses, and sing them so sweetly. How he would besiege the ear of Rose Salterne with amorous ditties! But still, he could not be everything; and if he had the bone and muscle of the family, it was but fair that Frank should have the brains and voice; and, after all, he was bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, and it was just the same as if he himself could do all the fine things which Frank could do; for as long as one of the family won honour, what matter which of them it was? Whereon he shouted through the wall, "Good night, old song-thrush; I suppose I need not pay the musicians."

"What, awake?" answered Frank. "Come in here, and lull me to sleep with a sea-song."

So Amyas went in, and found Frank laid on the outside of his bed not yet undrest.

"I am a bad sleeper," said he; "I spend more time, I fear, in burning the midnight oil than prudent men should. Come and be my jongleur, my minne-singer, and tell me about Andes, and cannibals, and the ice-regions, and the fire-regions, and the paradises of the West."

So Amyas sat down, and told: but somehow, every story which he tried to tell came round, by crooked paths, yet sure, to none other point than Rose Salterne, and how he thought of her here, and thought of her there, and how he wondered what she would say if she had seen him in this adventure, and how he longed to have had her with him to show her that glorious sight, till Frank let him have his own way, and then out came the whole story of the simple fellow's daily and

hourly devotion to her, through those three long years of world-wide wanderings.

"And oh, Frank, I could hardly think of anything but her in the church the other day, God forgive me! and it did seem so hard for her to be the only face which I did not see—and have not seen her yet, either."

"So I thought, dear lad," said Frank, with one of his sweetest smiles; "and tried to get her father to let her impersonate the nymph of Torridge."

"Did you, you dear kind fellow? That would have been too delicious."

"Just so, too delicious; wherefore, I suppose, it was ordained not to be, that which was being delicious enough."

"And is she as pretty as ever?"

"Ten times as pretty, dear lad, as half the young fellows round have discovered. If you mean to win her and wear her (and God grant you may fare no worse!) you will have rivals enough to get rid of."

"Humph!" said Amyas, "I hope I shall not have to make short work with some of them."

"I hope not," said Frank, laughing. "Now go to bed, and to-morrow morning give your sword to mother to keep, lest you should be tempted to draw it on any of her Majesty's lieges."

"No fear of that, Frank; I am no swash-buckler, thank God; but if any one gets in my way, I'll serve him as the mastiff did the terrier, and just drop him over the quay into the river, to cool himself, or my name's not Amyas."

And the giant swung himself laughing out of the room, and slept all night like a seal, not without dreams, of course, of Rose Salterne.

The next morning, according to his wont, he went into his mother's room, whom he was sure to find up, and at her prayers; for he liked to say his prayers, too, by her side, as he used to do when he was a little boy. It seemed so homelike, he said, after three years' knocking up and down in no-man's land. But coming gently to the door, for fear of disturbing her, and entering unperceived, beheld a sight which stopped him short.

Mrs. Leigh was sitting in her chair, with her face bowed fondly down upon the head of his brother Frank, who knelt before her, his face buried in her lap. Amyas could see that his whole form was quivering with stifled emotion. Their mother was just finishing the last words of a well-known text—

—"for my sake, and the Gospel's, shall receive a hundredfold in this present life, fathers, and mothers, and brothers, and sisters."

"But not a wife!" interrupted Frank, with a voice stifled with sobs; "that was too precious a gift for even Him to promise to those who gave up a first love for His sake!"

"And yet," said he, after a moment's silence, "has He not heaped me with blessings enough already, that I must repine and rage at His refusing me one more, even though that one be—No, mother! I am your son, and God's; and you shall know it, even though Amyas never does!" And he looked up with his

clear blue eyes and white forehead; and his face was as the face of an angel.

Both of them saw that Amyas was present, and started and blushed. His mother motioned him away with her eyes, and he went quietly out, as one stunned. Why had his name been mentioned?

Love, cunning love, told him all at once. This was the meaning of last night's canzonet! This was why its words had seemed to fit his own heart so well! His brother was his rival. And he had been telling him all his love last night. What a stupid brute he was! How it must have made poor Frank wince! And then Frank had listened so kindly; even bid him God speed in his suit. What a gentleman old Frank was, to be sure! No wonder the Queen was so fond of him, and all the court ladies! ——Why, if it came to that, what wonder if Rose Salterne should be fond of him too? Hey-day! "That would be a pretty fish to find in my net when I come to haul it!" quoth Amyas to himself, as he paced the garden; and clutching desperately hold of his locks with both hands, as if to hold his poor confused head on its shoulders, he strode and tramped up and down the shell-paved garden walks for a full half hour, till Frank's voice (as cheerful as ever, though he more than suspected all) called him.

"Come in to breakfast, lad; and stop grinding and creaking upon those miserable limpets, before thou hast set every tooth in my head on edge!"

Amyas, whether by dint of holding his head straight, or by higher means, had got the thoughts of

the said head straight enough by this time; and in he came, and fell to upon the broiled fish and strong ale, with a sort of fury, as determined to do his duty to the utmost in all matters that day; and therefore, of course, in that most important matter of bodily sustenance; while his mother and Frank looked at him, not without anxiety and even terror, doubting what turn his fancy might have taken in so new a case; at last—

"My dear Amyas, you will really heat your blood with all that strong ale! Remember, those who drink beer, think beer."

"Then they think right good thoughts, mother. And in the meanwhile, those who drink water, think water. Eh, old Frank? and here's your health."

"And clouds are water," said his mother, somewhat reassured by his genuine good humour; "and so are rainbows; and clouds are angels' thrones, and rainbows the sign of God's peace on earth."

Amyas understood the hint, and laughed. "Then I'll pledge Frank out of the next ditch, if it please you and him. But first—I say—he must hearken to a parable; a manner mystery, miracle play, I have got in my head, like what they have at Easter, to the town-hall. Now then, hearken, madam, and I and Frank will act." And up rose Amyas, and shoved back his chair, and put on a solemn face.

Mrs. Leigh looked up, trembling; and Frank, he scarce knew why, rose.

"No; you pitch again. You are King David, and sit still upon your throne. David was a great singer,

you know, and a player on the viols; and ruddy, too, and of a fair countenance; so that will fit. Now, then, mother, don't look so frightened. I am not going to play Goliath, for all my cubits; I am to present Nathan the prophet. Now, David, hearken, for I have a message unto thee, O King!

"There were two men in one city, one rich, and the other poor: and the rich man had many flocks and herds, and all the fine ladies in Whitehall to court if he liked; and the poor man had nothing but——"

And in spite of his broad honest smile, Amyas's deep voice began to tremble and choke.

Frank sprang up, and burst into tears:—"Oh! Amyas, my brother, my brother! stop! I cannot endure this. Oh, God! was it not enough to have entangled myself in this fatal fancy, but over and above, I must meet the shame of my brother's discovering it?"

"What shame, then, I'd like to know?" said Amyas, recovering himself. "Look here, brother Frank! I've thought it all over in the garden; and I was an ass and a braggart for talking to you as I did last night. Of course you love her! Everybody must; and I was a fool for not recollecting that; and if you love her, your taste and mine agree, and what can be better? I think you are a sensible fellow for loving her, and you think me one. And as for who has her, why, you're the eldest; and first come first served is the rule, and best to keep to it. Besides, brother Frank, though I'm no scholar, yet I'm not so blind but that I tell the difference between you and me; and of

course your chance against mine, for a hundred to one; and I am not going to be fool enough to row against wind and tide too. I'm good enough for her, I hope; but if I am, you are better, and the good dog may run, but it's the best that takes the hare; and so I have nothing more to do with the matter at all; and if you marry her, why, it will set the old house on its legs again, and that's the first thing to be thought of, and you may just as well do it as I, and better too. Not but that it's a plague, a horrible plague!" went on Amyas, with a ludicrously doleful visage; "but so are other things too, by the dozen; it's all in the day's work, as the huntsman said when the lion ate him. One would never get through the furze-croft if one stopped to pull out the prickles. The pig didn't scramble out of the ditch by squeaking; and the less said the sooner mended; nobody was sent into the world only to suck honey-pots. What must be must, man is but dust; if you can't get crumb, you must fain eat crust. So I'll go and join the army in Ireland, and get it out of my head, for cannon balls fright away love as well as poverty does; and that's all I've got to say." Wherewith Amyas sat down, and returned to the beer; while Mrs. Leigh wept tears of joy.

"Amyas! Amyas!" said Frank; "you must not throw away the hopes of years, and for me, too! Oh, how just was your parable! Ah! mother mine! to what use is all my scholarship and my philosophy, when this dear simple sailor-lad outdoes me at the first trial of courtesy!"

"My children, my children, which of you shall I love best? Which of you is the more noble? I thanked God this morning for having given me one such son; but to have found that I possess two!" And Mrs. Leigh laid her head on the table, and buried her face in her hands, while the generous battle went on.

"But, dearest Amyas!——"

"But, Frank! if you don't hold your tongue, I must go forth. It was quite trouble enough to make up one's mind, without having you afterwards trying to unmake it again."

"Amyas! if you give her up to me, God do so to me, and more also, if I do not hereby give her up to you!"

"He had done it already—this morning!" said Mrs. Leigh, looking up through her tears. "He renounced her for ever on his knees before me! only he is too noble to tell you so."

"The more reason I should copy him," said Amyas, setting his lips, and trying to look desperately determined, and then suddenly jumping up, he leaped upon Frank, and throwing his arms round his neck, sobbed out, "There, there, now! For God's sake, let us forget all, and think about our mother, and the old house, and how we may win her honour before we die! and that will be enough to keep our hands full, without fretting about this woman and that.—What an ass I have been for years! instead of learning my calling, dreaming about her, and don't know at this minute, whether she cares more for me than she does for her father's 'prentices!"

"Oh, Amyas! every word of yours puts me to fresh shame! Will you believe that I know as little of her likings as you do?"

"Don't tell me that, and play the devil's game by putting fresh hopes into me, when I am trying to kick them out. I won't believe it. If she is not a fool, she must love you; and if she don't, why, behanged if she is worth loving!"

"My dearest Amyas! I must ask you too to make no more such speeches to me. All those thoughts I have forsworn."

"Only this morning; so there is time to catch them again before they are gone too far."

"Only this morning," said Frank, with a quiet smile: "but centuries have passed since then."

"Centuries? I don't see many grey hairs yet."

"I should not have been surprised if you had, though," answered Frank, in so sad and meaning a tone that Amyas could only answer,

"Well, you are an angel!"

"You, at least, are something even more to the purpose, for you are a man!"

And both spoke truth, and so the battle ended; and Frank went to his books, while Amyas, who must needs be doing, if he was not to dream, started off to the dock-yard to potter about a new ship of Sir Richard's, and forget his woes, in the capacity of Sir Oracle among the sailors. And so he had played his move for Rose, even as Eustace had, and lost her: but not as Eustace had.

CHAPTER V.

CLOVELLY COURT IN THE OLDEN TIME.

"It was among the ways of good Queen Bess,
Who ruled as well as ever mortal can, sir,
When she was stogg'd, and the country in a mess,
She was wont to send for a Devon man, sir."

West Country Song.

THE next morning Amyas Leigh was not to be found. Not that he had gone out to drown himself in despair, or even to bemoan himself "down by the Torridge side." He had simply ridden off, Frank found, to Sir Richard Grenvile at Stow: his mother at once divined the truth, that he was gone to try for a post in the Irish army, and sent off Frank after him to bring him home again, and make him at least reconsider himself.

So Frank took horse and rode thereon ten miles or more: and then, as there were no inns on the road in those days, or indeed in these, and he had some ten miles more of hilly road before him, he turned down the hill towards Clovelly Court, to obtain, after the hospitable humane fashion of those days, good entertainment for man and horse from Mr. Cary the squire.

And when he walked self invited, like the loud-shouting Menelaus, in the long dark wainscotted hall of the Court, the first object he beheld was the mighty

form of Amyas, who, seated at the long table, was alternately burying his face in a pasty, and the pasty in his face, his sorrows having, as it seemed, only sharpened his appetite, while young Will Cary, kneeling on the opposite bench, with his elbows on the table, was in that graceful attitude laying down the law fiercely to him in a low voice.

"Hillo! lad," cried Amyas; "come hither and deliver me out of the hands of this fire-eater, who I verily believe will kill me, if I do not let him kill some one else."

"Ah! Mr. Frank," said Will Cary, who, like all other young gentlemen of these parts, held Frank in high honour, and considered him a very oracle and cynosure of fashion and chivalry, "welcome here: I was just longing for you, too; I wanted your advice on half-a-dozen matters. Sit down, and eat. There is the ale."

"None so early, thank you."

"Ah, no!" said Amyas, burying his head in the tankard, and then mimicking Frank, "avoid strong ale o' mornings. It heats the blood, thickens the animal spirits, and obfuscates the cerebrum with frenetical and lymphatic idols, which cloud the quint-essential light of the pure reason. Eh? young Plato, young Daniel, come hither to judgment! And yet, though I cannot see through the bottom of the tankard already, I can see plain enough still to see this, that Will shall not fight."

"Shall I not, eh? who says that? Mr. Frank, I appeal to you, now; only hear."

"We are in the judgment-seat," said Frank, settling to the pasty. "Proceed, appellant."

"Well, I was telling Amyas, that Tom Coffin, of Portledge; I will stand him no longer."

"Let him be, then," said Amyas; "he could stand very well by himself, when I saw him last."

"Plague on you, hold your tongue. Has he any right to look at me as he does, whenever I pass him?"

"That depends on how he looks; a cat may look at a king, provided she don't take him for a mouse."

"Oh, I know how he looks, and what he means too, and he shall stop, or I will stop him. And the other day, when I spoke of Rose Salterne."—"Ah!" groaned Frank, "Atè's apple again!"—"(never mind what I said) he burst out laughing in my face; and is not that a fair quarrel? And what is more, I know that he wrote a sonnet, and sent it her to Stow by a market woman. What right has he to write sonnets when I can't? It's not fair play, Mr. Frank, or I am a Jew, and a Spaniard, and a papist; it's not!" And Will smote the table till the plates danced again.

"My dear knight of the burning pestle, I have a plan, a device, a disentanglement, according to most approved rules of chivalry. Let us fix a day, and summon by tuck of drum all young gentlemen under the age of thirty, dwelling within fifteen miles of the habitation of that peerless Oriana."

"And all 'prentice-boys too," cried Amyas out of the pasty.

"And all 'prentice-boys. The bold lads shall fight first, with good quarterstaves, in Bideford Market,

till all heads are broken; and the head which is not broken, let the back belong to it pay the penalty of the noble member's cowardice. After which grand tournament, to which that of Tottenham shall be but a flea-bite and a batrachomyomachy—"

"Confound you, and your long words, sir," said poor Will, "I know you are flouting me."

"Pazienza, Signor Cavaliere; that which is to come is no flouting, but bloody and warlike earnest. For afterwards all the young gentlemen shall adjourn into a convenient field, sand, or bog—which last will be better, as no man will be able to run away, if he be up to his knees in soft peat: and there stripping to our shirts, with rapiers of equal length and keenest temper, each shall slay his man, catch who catch can, and the conquerors fight again, like a most valiant main of gamecocks as we are, till all be dead, and out of their woes; after which the survivor, bewailing before heaven and earth the cruelty of our Fair Oriana, and the slaughter which her basiliscine eyes have caused, shall fall gracefully upon his sword, and so end the woes of this our lovelorn generation. *Placetne Domini?* as they used to ask in the Senate at Oxford."

"Really," said Cary, "this is too bad."

"So is, pardon me, your fighting Mr. Coffin with anything longer than a bodkin."

"Bodkins are too short for such fierce Bobadils," said Amyas; "they would close in so near, that we should have them falling to fisticuffs after the first bout."

"Then let them fight with squirts across the

market-place; for by heaven and the Queen's laws, they shall fight with nothing else."

"My dear Mr. Cary," went on Frank, suddenly changing his bantering tone to one of the most winning sweetness; "do not fancy that I cannot feel for you; or that I, as well as you, have not known the stings of love, and the bitterer stings of jealousy. But oh, Mr. Cary, does it not seem to you an awful thing to waste selfishly upon your own quarrel that divine wrath which, as Plato says, is the very root of all virtues, and which has been given you, like all else which you have, that you may spend it in the service of her whom all bad souls fear, and all virtuous souls adore,—our peerless Queen? Who dares, while she rules England, call his sword or his courage his own, or any one's but hers? Are there no Spaniards to conquer, no wild Irish to deliver from their oppressors, that two gentlemen of Devon can find no better place to flesh their blades than in each other's valiant and honourable hearts?"

"By heaven!" cried Amyas, "Frank speaks like a book; and for me, I do think that Christian gentlemen may leave love quarrels to bulls and rams."

"And that the heir of Clovelly," said Frank, smiling, "may find more noble examples to copy than the stags in his own deer-park."

"Well," said Will penitently, "you are a great scholar, Mr. Frank, and you speak like one; but gentlemen must fight sometimes, or where would be their honour.

"I speak," said Frank a little proudly, "not merely

as a scholar, but as a gentleman, and one who has fought ere now, and to whom it has happened, Mr. Cary, to kill his man (on whose soul may God have mercy); but it is my pride to remember that I have never yet fought in my own quarrel, and my trust in God that I never shall. For as there is nothing more noble and blessed than to fight in behalf of those whom we love, so to fight in our own private behalf is a thing not to be allowed to a Christian man, unless refusal imports utter loss of life or honour; and even then, it may be (though I would not lay a burden on any man's conscience), it is better not to resist evil, but to overcome it with good."

"And I can tell you, Will," said Amyas, "I am not troubled with fear of ghosts; but when I cut off the Frenchman's head, I said to myself, 'If that braggart had been slandering me instead of her gracious Majesty, I should expect to see that head lying on my pillow every time I went to bed at night."

"God forbid!" said Will with a shudder. "But what shall I do? for to the market to-morrow I will go, if it were choke-full of Coffins, and a ghost in each coffin of the lot."

"Leave the matter to me," said Amyas. "I have my device, as well as scholar Frank here; and if there be, as I suppose there must be, a quarrel in the market to-morrow, see if I do not——"

"Well, you are two good fellows," said Will. "Let us have another tankard in."

"And drink the health of Mr. Coffin, and all gallant lads of the north," said Frank; "and now to my

business. I have to take this runaway youth here home to his mother; and if he will not go quietly, I have orders to carry him across my saddle."

"I hope your nag has a strong back, then," said Amyas; "but I must go on and see Sir Richard, Frank. It is all very well to jest as we have been doing, but my mind is made up."

"Stop," said Cary. "You must stay here to-night; first, for good fellowship's sake; and next, because I want the advice of our Phœnix here, our oracle, our paragon. There, Mr. Frank, can you construe that for me? Speak low, though, gentlemen both; there comes my father; you had better give me the letter again. Well, father, whence this morning?"

"Eh, company here? Young men, you are always welcome, and such as you. Would there were more of your sort in these dirty times. How is your good mother, Frank, eh? Where have I been, Will? Round the house-farm, to look at the beeves. That sheeted heifer of Prowse's is all wrong; her coat stares like a hedgepig's. Tell Jewell to go up and bring her in before night. And then up the forty acres; sprang two coveys, and picked a leash out of them. The Irish hawk flies as wild as any haggard still, and will never make a bird. I had to hand her to Tom, and take the little peregrine. Give me a Clovelly hawk against the world, after all; and—heigh ho, I am very hungry! Half-past twelve, and dinner not served? What, Master Amyas, spoiling your appetite with strong ale? Better have tried sack, lad; have some now with me."

And the worthy old gentleman, having finished his oration, settled himself on a great bench inside the chimney, and put his hawk on a perch over his head, while his cockers coiled themselves up close to the warm peat-ashes, and his son set to work to pull off his father's boots, amid sundry warnings to take care of his corns.

"Come, Master Amyas, a pint of white wine and sugar, and a bit of a shoeing-horn to it ere we dine. Some pickled prawns, now, or a rasher off the coals, to whet you?"

"Thank you," quoth Amyas; "but I have drunk a mort of outlandish liquors, better and worse, in the last three years, and yet never found aught to come up to good ale, which needs neither shoeing-horn before nor after, but takes care of itself, and of all honest stomachs too, I think."

"You speak like a book, boy," said old Cary; "and after all, what a plague comes of these new-fangled hot wines, and aqua vitæs, which have come in since the wars, but maddening of the brains, and fever of the blood?"

"I fear we have not seen the end of that yet," said Frank. "My friends write me from the Netherlands that our men are falling into a swinish trick of swilling like the Hollanders. Heaven grant that they may not bring home the fashion with them."

"A man must drink, they say, or die of the ague, in those vile swamps," said Amyas. "When they get home here, they will not need it."

"Heaven grant it," said Frank; "I should be

sorry to see Devonshire a drunken county; and there are many of our men out there with Mr. Champernoun."

"Ah," said Cary, "there, as in Ireland, we are proving her Majesty's saying true, that Devonshire is her right hand, and the young children thereof like the arrows in the hand of the giant."

"They may well be," said his son, "when some of them are giants themselves, like my tall schoolfellow opposite."

"He will be up and doing again presently, I'll warrant him," said old Cary.

"And that I shall," quoth Amyas. "I have been devising brave deeds; and see in the distance enchanters to be bound, dragons choked, empires conquered, though not in Holland."

"You do?" asked Will, a little sharply; for he had had a half suspicion that more was meant than met the ear.

"Yes," said Amyas, turning off his jest again, "I go to what Raleigh calls the Land of the Nymphs. Another month, I hope, will see me abroad, in Ireland."

"Abroad? Call it rather at home," said old Cary; "for it is full of Devon men from end to end, and you will be among friends all day long. George Bourchier from Tawstock has the army now in Munster, and Warham St. Leger is Marshal; George Carew is with Lord Grey of Wilton (Poor Peter Carew was killed at Glendalough); and after the defeat last year, when that villain Desmond cut off Herbert and Price, the companies were made up with six hundred Devon

men, and Arthur Fortescue at their head; so that the old county holds her head as proudly in the Land of Ire as she does in the Low Countries and the Spanish main."

"And where," asked Amyas, "is Davils of Marsland, who used to teach me how to catch trout, when I was staying down at Stow? He is in Ireland, too, is he not?"

"Ah, my lad," said Mr. Cary, "that is a sad story. I thought all England had known it."

"You forget, sir, I am a stranger. Surely he is not dead?"

"Murdered foully, lad! Murdered like a dog, and by the man whom he had treated as his son, and who pretended, the false knave! to call him father."

"His blood is avenged?" said Amyas fiercely.

"No, by heaven, not yet! Stay, don't cry out again. I am getting old—I must tell my story my own way. It was last July,—was it not, Will?—Over comes to Ireland Saunders, one of those Jesuit foxes, as the Pope's legate, with money and bulls, and a banner hallowed by the Pope, and the devil knows what beside; and with him James Fitzmaurice, the same fellow who had sworn on his knees to Perrott, in the church at Kilmallock, to be a true liegeman to Queen Elizabeth, and confirmed it by all his saints, and such a world of his Irish howling, that Perrott told me he was fain to stop his own ears. Well, he had been practising with the King of France, but got nothing but laughter for his pains, and so went over to the Most Catholic King, and promises him to join

Ireland to Spain, and set up popery again, and what not. And he, I suppose, thinking it better that Ireland should belong to him than to the Pope's bastard, fits him out, and sends him off on such another errand as Stukely's,—though I will say, for the honour of Devon, if Stukely lived like a fool, he died like an honest man."

"Sir Thomas Stukely dead too?" said Amyas.

"Wait a while, lad, and you shall have that tragedy afterwards. Well, where was I? Oh, Fitzmaurice and the Jesuits land at Smerwick, with three ships, choose a place for a fort, bless it with their holy water, and their moppings and their scourings, and the rest of it, to purify it from the stain of heretic dominion; but in the meanwhile one of the Courtenays,—a Courtenay of Haccombe, was it?—or a Courtenay of Boconnock? Silence, Will, I shall have it in a minute —yes, a Courtenay of Haccombe it was, lying at anchor near by, in a ship of war of his, cuts out the three ships, and cuts off the Dons from the sea. John and James Desmond, with some small rabble, go over to the Spaniards. Earl Desmond will not join them, but will not fight them, and stands by to take the winning side; and then in comes poor Davils, sent down by the Lord Deputy to charge Desmond and his brothers, in the Queen's name, to assault the Spaniards. Folks say it was rash of his Lordship: but I say, what could be better done? Every one knows that there never was a stouter or shrewder soldier than Davils; and the young Desmonds, I have heard him say many a time, used to look on him as

their father. But he found out what it was to trust Englishmen turned Irish. Well, the Desmonds found out on a sudden that the Dons were such desperate Paladins, that it was madness to meddle, though they were five to one; and poor Davils, seeing that there was no fight in them, goes back for help, and sleeps that night at some place called Tralee. Arthur Carter of Bideford, St. Leger's lieutenant, as stout an old soldier as Davils himself, sleeps in the same bed with him; the lacquey-boy, who is now with Sir Richard at Stow, on the floor at their feet. But in the dead of night, who should come in but James Desmond, sword in hand, with a dozen of his ruffians at his heels, each with his glib over his ugly face, and his skene in his hand. Davils springs up in bed, and asks but this, 'What is the matter, my son?' whereon the treacherous villain, without giving him time to say a prayer, strikes at him, naked as he was, crying, 'Thou shalt be my father no longer, nor I thy son! Thou shalt die!' and at that all the rest fall on him. The poor little lad (so he says) leaps up to cover his master with his naked body, gets three or four stabs of skenes, and so falls for dead; with his master and Captain Carter, who were dead indeed—God reward them! After that the ruffians ransacked the house, till they had murdered every Englishman in it, the lacquey-boy only excepted, who crawled out, wounded as he was, through a window; while Desmond, if you will believe it, went back, up to his elbows in blood, and vaunted his deeds to the Spaniards, and asked them—'There! Will you take that as a pledge that I am

faithful to you?' And that, my lad, was the end of Henry Davils, and will be of all who trust to the faith of wild savages."

"I would go a hundred miles to see that Desmond hanged!" said Amyas, while great tears ran down his face. "Poor Mr. Davils! And now, what is the story of Sir Thomas?"

"Your brother must tell you that, lad; I am somewhat out of breath."

"And I have a right to tell it," said Frank, with a smile. "Do you know that I was very near being Earl of the bog of Allen, and one of the peers of the realm to King Buoncompagna, son and heir to his Holiness Pope Gregory the Thirteenth?"

"No, surely!"

"As I am a gentleman. When I was at Rome I saw poor Stukely often; and this and more he offered me on the part (as he said) of the Pope, if I would just oblige him in the two little matters of being reconciled to the Catholic Church, and joining the invasion of Ireland."

"Poor deluded heretic," said Will Cary, "to have lost an earldom for your family by such silly scruples of loyalty!"

"It is not a matter for jesting, after all," said Frank; "but I saw Sir Thomas often, and I cannot believe he was in his senses, so frantic was his vanity and his ambition; and all the while, in private matters as honourable a gentleman as ever. However, he sailed at last for Ireland, with his eight hundred Spaniards and Italians; and what is more, I know

that the King of Spain paid their charges. Marquis Vinola—James Buoncompagna, that is—stayed quietly at Rome, preferring that Stukely should conquer his paternal heritage of Ireland for him while he took care of the *bona robas* at home. I went down to Civita Vecchia to see him off; and though his younger by many years, I could not but take the liberty of entreating him, as a gentleman and a man of Devon, to consider his faith to his Queen and the honour of his country. There were high words between us; God forgive me if I spoke too fiercely, for I never saw him again."

"Too fiercely to an open traitor, Frank? Why not have run him through?"

"Nay, I had no clean life for Sundays, Amyas; so I could not throw away my week-day one; and as for the weal of England, I knew that it was little he would damage it, and told him so. And at that he waxed utterly mad, for it touched his pride, and swore that if the wind had not been fair for sailing, he would have fought me there and then; to which I could only answer, that I was ready to meet him when he would; and he parted from me, saying, 'It is a pity, sir, I cannot fight you now; when next we meet, it will be beneath my dignity to measure swords with you.'

"I suppose he expected to come back a prince at least—Heaven knows; I owe him no ill-will, nor I hope does any man. He has paid all debts now in full, and got his receipt for them."

"How did he die, then, after all?"

"On his voyage he touched in Portugal. King

Sebastian was just sailing for Africa with his new ally, Mohammed the Prince of Fez, to help King Abdallah, and conquer what he could. He persuaded Stukely to go with him. There were those who thought that he as well as the Spaniards, had no stomach for seeing the Pope's son King of Ireland. Others used to say that he thought an island too small for his ambition, and must needs conquer a continent—I know not why it was, but he went. They had heavy weather in the passage; and when they landed, many of their soldiers were sea-sick. Stukely, reasonably enough, counselled that they should wait two or three days and recruit; but Don Sebastian was so mad for the assault, that he must needs have his *veni, vidi, vici;* and so ended with a *veni, vidi, perii;* for he, Abdallah, and his son Mohammed, all perished in the first battle at Alcasar; and Stukely, surrounded and overpowered, fought till he could fight no more, and then died like a hero with all his wounds in front; and may God have mercy on his soul!"

"Ah!" said Amyas, "we heard of that battle off Lima, but nothing about poor Stukely."

"That last was a Popish prayer, Master Frank," said old Mr. Cary.

"Most worshipful sir, you surely would not wish God not to have mercy on his soul?"

"No—eh? Of course not: but that's all settled by now, for he is dead, poor fellow."

"Certainly, my dear sir. And you cannot help being a little fond of him still."

"Eh? why, I should be a brute if I were not. He

and I were schoolfellows, though he was somewhat the younger; and many a good thrashing have I given him, and one cannot help having a tenderness for a man after that. Beside, we used to hunt together in Exmoor, and have royal nights afterward into Ilfracombe, when we were a couple of mad young blades. Fond of him? Why, I would have sooner given my forefinger than that he should have gone to the dogs thus."

"Then, my dear sir, if you feel for him still, in spite of all his faults, how do you know that God may not feel for him still, in spite of all his faults? For my part," quoth Frank in his fanciful way, "without believing in that Popish Purgatory, I cannot help holding with Plato, that such heroical souls, who have wanted but little of true greatness, are hereafter by some strait discipline brought to a better mind; perhaps, as many ancients have held with the Indian Gymnosophists, by transmigration into the bodies of those animals whom they have resembled in their passions; and indeed, if Sir Thomas Stukely's soul should now animate the body of a lion, all I can say is that he would be a very valiant and royal lion; and also doubtless become in due time heartily ashamed and penitent for having been nothing better than a lion."

"What now, Master Frank? I don't trouble my head with such matters—I say Stukely was a right good-hearted fellow at bottom; and if you plague my head with any of your dialectics, and propositions, and college quips and quiddities, you shan't have any more

sack, sir! But here come the knaves, and I hear the cook knock to dinner."

After a madrigal or two, and an Italian song of Master Frank's, all which went sweetly enough, the ladies rose, and went. Whereon Will Cary, drawing his chair close to Frank's, put quietly into his hand a dirty letter.

"This was the letter left for me," whispered he, "by a country fellow this morning. Look at it, and tell me what I am to do."

Whereon Frank opened, and read—

> " Mister Cary, be you wary,
> By deer park end to-night.
> Yf Irish ffoxe com out of rocks
> Grip and hold hym tight."

"I would have showed it my father," said Will, "but——"

"I verily believe it to be a blind. See now, this is the handwriting of a man who has been trying to write vilely, and yet cannot. Look at that B, and that G; their *formæ formativæ* never were begotten in a hedge-school. And what is more, this is no Devon man's handiwork. We say 'to' and not 'by,' Will, eh? in the West country?"

"Of course."

"And 'man,' instead of 'him'?"

"True, O Daniel! But am I to do nothing therefore?"

"On that matter I am no judge. Let us ask much-enduring Ulysses here; perhaps he has not sailed round the world without bringing home a device or two."

Whereon Amyas was called to counsel, as soon as Mr. Cary could be stopped in a long cross-examination of him as to Mr. Doughty's famous trial and execution.

Amyas pondered awhile, thrusting his hands into his long curls; and then—

"Will, my lad, have you been watching at the Deer Park End of late?"

"Never."

"Where, then?"

"At the town-beach."

"Where else?"

"At the town-head."

"Where else?"

"Why, the fellow is turned lawyer! Above Freshwater."

"Where is Freshwater?"

"Why, where the waterfall comes over the cliff, half-a-mile from the town. There is a path there up into the forest."

"I know. I'll watch there to-night. Do you keep all your old haunts safe, of course, and send a couple of stout knaves to the mill, to watch the beach at the Deer Park End, on the chance; for your poet may be a true man, after all. But my heart's faith is, that this comes just to draw you off from some old beat of yours, upon a wild goose chase. If they shoot the miller by mistake, I suppose it don't much matter?"

"Marry, no.

> "'When a miller's knock'd on the head,
> The less of flour makes the more of bread.'"

"Or, again," chimed in old Mr. Cary, "as they say in the North—

> " 'Find a miller that will not steal,
> Or a webster that is leal,
> Or a priest that is not greedy,
> And lay them three a dead corpse by;
> And by the virtue of them three,
> The said dead corpse shall quicken'd be.'"

"But why are you so ready to watch Freshwater to-night, Master Amyas?"

"Because, sir, those who come, if they come, will never land at Mouthmill; if they are strangers, they dare not; and if they are bay's-men, they are too wise, as long as the westerly swell sets in. As for landing at the town, that would be too great a risk; but Freshwater is as lonely as the Bermudas; and they can beach a boat up under the cliff at all tides, and in all weathers, except north and nor'-west. I have done it many a time, when I was a boy."

"And give us the fruit of your experience now in your old age, eh? Well, you have a grey head on green shoulders, my lad; and I verily believe you are right. Who will you take with you to watch?"

"Sir," said Frank, "I will go with my brother; and that will be enough."

"Enough? He is big enough, and you brave enough, for ten; but still, the more the merrier."

"But the fewer, the better fare. If I might ask a first and last favour, worshipful sir," said Frank, very earnestly, "you would grant me two things: that you would let none go to Freshwater but me and my

brother; and that whatsoever we shall bring you back shall be kept as secret as the commonweal and your loyalty shall permit. I trust that we are not so unknown to you, or to others, that you can doubt for a moment but that whatsoever we may do will satisfy at once your honour and our own."

"My dear young gentleman, there is no need of so many courtier's words. I am your father's friend, and yours. And God forbid that a Cary—for I guess your drift—should ever wish to make a head or a heart ache; that is, more than——"

"Those of whom it is written, 'Though thou bray a fool in a mortar, yet will not his folly depart from him,'" interposed Frank, in so sad a tone that no one at the table replied; and few more words were exchanged, till the two brothers were safe outside the house; and then—

"Amyas," said Frank, "that was a Devon man's handiwork, nevertheless; it was Eustace's handwriting."

"Impossible!"

"No, lad. I have been secretary to a prince, and learnt to interpret cipher, and to watch every penstroke; and, young as I am, I think that I am not easily deceived. Would God I were! Come on, lad; and strike no man hastily, lest thou cut off thine own flesh."

So forth the two went, along the park to the eastward, and past the head of the little wood-embosomed fishing-town, a steep stair of houses clinging to the cliff far below them, the bright slate roofs and white

walls, glittering in the moonlight; and on some half-mile farther, along the steep hill-side, fenced with oak wood down to the water's edge, by a narrow forest path, to a point where two glens meet and pour their streamlets over a cascade some hundred feet in height into the sea below. By the side of this waterfall a narrow path climbs upward from the beach; and here it was that the two brothers expected to meet the messenger.

Frank insisted on taking his station below Amyas. He said that he was certain that Eustace himself would make his appearance, and that he was more fit than Amyas to bring him to reason by parley; that if Amyas would keep watch some twenty yards above, the escape of the messenger would be impossible. Moreover, he was the elder brother, and the post of honour was his right. So Amyas obeyed him, after making him promise that if more than one man came up the path, he would let them pass him before he challenged, so that both might bring them to bay at the same time.

So Amyas took his station under a high marl bank, and, bedded in luxuriant crown-ferns, kept his eye steadily on Frank, who sat down on a little knoll of rock (where is now a garden on the cliff-edge) which parts the path and the dark chasm down which the stream rushes to its final leap over the cliff.

There Amyas sat a full half-hour, and glanced at whiles from Frank to look upon the scene around. Outside the south-west wind blew fresh and strong, and the moonlight danced upon a thousand crests

of foam; but within the black jagged point which sheltered the town, the sea did but heave, in long oily swells of rolling silver, onward into the black shadow of the hills, within which the town and pier lay invisible, save where a twinkling light gave token of some lonely fisher's wife, watching the weary night through for the boat which would return with dawn. Here and there upon the sea, a black speck marked a herring-boat, drifting with its line of nets; and right off the mouth of the glen, Amyas saw, with a beating heart, a large two-masted vessel lying-to—that must be the "Portugal!" Eagerly he looked up the glen, and listened; but he heard nothing but the sweeping of the wind across the downs five hundred feet above, and the sough of the waterfall upon the rocks below; he saw nothing but the vast black sheets of oak-wood sloping up to the narrow blue sky above, and the broad bright hunter's moon, and the woodcocks, which, chuckling to each other, hawked to and fro, like swallows, between the tree-tops and the sky.

At last he heard a rustle of the fallen leaves; he shrank closer and closer into the darkness of the bank. Then swift light steps—not down the path, from above, but upward, from below; his heart beat quick and loud. And in another half-minute a man came in sight, within three yards of Frank's hiding-place.

Frank sprang out instantly. Amyas saw his bright blade glance in the clear October moonlight.

"Stand, in the Queen's name!"

The man drew a pistol from under his cloak, and fired full in his face. Had it happened in these days

of detonators, Frank's chance had been small; but to get a ponderous wheel-lock under weigh was a longer business, and before the fizzing of the flint had ceased, Frank had struck up the pistol with his rapier, and it exploded harmlessly over his head. The man instantly dashed the weapon in his face, and closed.

The blow, luckily, did not take effect on that delicate forehead, but struck him in the shoulder: nevertheless, Frank, who with all his grace and agility was as fragile as a lily, and a very bubble of the earth, staggered, and lost his guard, and before he could recover himself, Amyas saw a dagger gleam, and one, two, three blows fiercely repeated.

Mad with fury, he was with them in an instant. They were scuffling together so closely in the shade that he was afraid to use his sword point; but with the hilt he dealt a single blow full on the ruffian's cheek. It was enough; with a hideous shriek, the fellow rolled over at his feet, and Amyas set his foot on him, in act to run him through.

"Stop! stay!" almost screamed Frank; "it is Eustace! our cousin Eustace!" and he leant against a tree.

Amyas sprang towards him: but Frank waved him off.

"It is nothing—a scratch. He has papers: I am sure of it. Take them; and for God's sake let him go!"

"Villain! give me your papers!" cried Amyas, setting his foot once more on the writhing Eustace, whose jaw was broken across.

"You struck me foully from behind," moaned he, his vanity and envy even then coming out, in that faint and foolish attempt to prove Amyas not so very much better a man.

"Hound, do you think that I dare not strike you in front? Give me your papers, letters, whatever Popish devilry you carry; or as I live, I will cut off your head, and take them myself, even if it cost me the shame of stripping your corpse. Give them up! Traitor, murderer! give them, I say!" And setting his foot on him afresh, he raised his sword.

Eustace was usually no craven: but he was cowed. Between agony and shame, he had no heart to resist. Martyrdom, which looked so splendid when consummated *selon les règles* on Tower Hill or Tyburn, before pitying, or (still better) scoffing multitudes, looked a confused, dirty, ugly business there in the dark forest; and as he lay, a stream of moonlight bathed his mighty cousin's broad clear forehead, and his long golden locks, and his white terrible blade, till he seemed, to Eustace's superstitious eye, like one of those fair young St. Michaels trampling on the fiend, which he had seen abroad in old German pictures. He shuddered; pulled a packet from his bosom, and threw it from him, murmuring, "I have not given it."

"Swear to me that these are all the papers which you have, in cipher or out of cipher. Swear on your soul, or you die!"

Eustace swore.

"Tell me, who are your accomplices?"

"Never!" said Eustace. "Cruel! have you not

degraded me enough already?" and the wretched young man burst into tears, and hid his bleeding face in his hands.

One hint of honour made Amyas as gentle as a lamb. He lifted Eustace up, and bade him run for his life.

"I am to owe my life, then, to you?"

"Not in the least; only to your being a Leigh. Go, or it will be worse for you!" And Eustace went; while Amyas, catching up the precious packet, hurried to Frank. He had fainted already, and his brother had to carry him as far as the park, before he could find any of the other watchers. The blind, as far as they were concerned, was complete. They had heard and seen nothing. Whosoever had brought the packet had landed they knew not where; and so all returned to the Court, carrying Frank, who recovered gradually, having rather bruises than wounds; for his foe had struck wildly, and with a trembling hand.

Half-an-hour after, Amyas, Mr. Cary, and his son Will were in deep consultation over the following epistle, the only paper in the packet which was not in cipher:—

"✠ DEAR BROTHER N. *S. in Ch^to. et Ecclesia.*

"This is to inform you, and the friends of the cause, that S. Josephus has landed in Smerwick, with eight hundred valiant Crusaders, burning with holy zeal to imitate last year's martyrs of Carrigfolium, and to expiate their offences (which I fear may have been many) by the propagation of our most holy faith.

I have purified the fort (which they are strenuously rebuilding) with prayer and holy water, from the stain of heretical footsteps, and consecrated it afresh to the service of Heaven, as the first-fruits of the isle of saints; and having displayed the consecrated banner to the adoration of the faithful, have returned to Earl Desmond, that I may establish his faith, weak as yet, by reason of the allurements of this world: though since, by the valour of his brother James, he that hindered was taken out of the way (I mean Davils the heretic, sacrifice well-pleasing in the eyes of Heaven!) the young man has lent a more obedient ear to my counsels. If you can do anything, do it quickly, for a great door and effectual is opened, and there are many adversaries. But be swift, for so do the poor lambs of the Church tremble at the fury of the heretics, that a hundred will flee before one Englishmen. And indeed, were it not for that divine charity toward the Church (which covers the multitude of sins) with which they are resplendent, neither they nor their country would be, by the carnal judgment, counted worthy of so great labour in their behalf. For they themselves are given much to lying, theft, and drunkenness, vain babbling, and profane dancing and singing; and are still, as S. Gildas reports of them, 'more careful to shroud their villanous faces in bushy hair, than decently to cover their bodies;' while their land (by reason of the tyranny of their chieftains, and the continual wars and plunderings among their tribes, which leave them weak and divided, an easy prey to the myrmidons of the excommunicate and usurping

Englishwoman) lies utterly waste with fire, and defaced with corpses of the starved and slain. But what are these things, while the holy virtue of Catholic obedience still flourishes in their hearts? The Church cares not for the conservation of body and goods, but of immortal souls.

"If any devout lady shall so will, you may obtain from her liberality a shirt for this worthless tabernacle, and also a pair of hose; for I am unsavoury to myself and to others, and of such luxuries none here has superfluity; for all live in holy poverty, except the fleas, who have that consolation in this world for which this unhappy nation, and those who labour among them, must wait till the world to come.[1]

"Your loving brother,

"N. S."

"Sir Richard must know of this before daybreak," cried old Cary. "Eight hundred men landed! We must call out the Posse Comitatus, and sail with them bodily. I will go myself, old as I am. Spaniards in Ireland? not a dog of them must go home again."

"Not a dog of them," answered Will; "but where is Mr. Winter and his squadron?"

"Safe in Milford Haven; a messenger must be sent to him too."

"I'll go," said Amyas: "but Mr. Cary is right. Sir Richard must know all first."

"And we must have those Jesuits."

"What? Mr. Evans and Mr. Morgans? God help

[1] See note at end of chapter.

us—they are at my uncle's! Consider the honour of our family!"

"Judge for yourself, my dear boy," said old Mr. Cary, gently: "would it not be rank treason to let these foxes escape, while we have this damning proof against them?"

"I will go myself then."

"Why not? You may keep all straight, and Will shall go with you. Call a groom, Will, and get your horse saddled, and my Yorkshire grey; he will make better play with this big fellow on his back, than the little pony astride of which Mr. Leigh came walking in (as I hear) this morning. As for Frank, the ladies will see to him well enough, and glad enough, too, to have so fine a bird in their cage for a week or two."

"And my mother?"

"We'll send to her to-morrow by daybreak. Come, a stirrup cup to start with, hot and hot. Now, boots, cloaks, swords, a deep pull and a warm one, and away!"

"And the jolly old man bustled them out of the house and into their saddles, under the broad bright winter's moon.

"You must make your pace, lads, or the moon will be down before you are over the moors." And so away they went.

Neither of them spoke for many a mile. Amyas, because his mind was fixed firmly on the one object of saving the honour of his house; and Will, because he was hesitating between Ireland and the wars, and Rose Salterne and love-making. At last he spoke suddenly.

"I'll go, Amyas."

"Whither?"

"To Ireland with you, old man. I have dragged my anchor at last."

"What anchor, my lad of parables?"

"See, here am I, a tall and gallant ship."

"Modest even if not true."

"Inclination, like an anchor, holds me tight."

"To the mud."

"Nay, to a bed of roses—not without their thorns."

"Hillo? I have seen oysters grow on fruit-trees before now, but never an anchor in a rose-garden."

"Silence or my allegory will go to noggin-staves."

"Against the rocks of my flinty discernment."

"Pooh—well. Up comes duty like a jolly breeze, blowing dead from the north-east and as bitter and cross as a north-easter too, and tugs me away toward Ireland. I hold on by the rose-bed—any ground in a storm—till every strand is parted, and off I go, westward ho! to get my throat cut in a bog-hole with Amyas Leigh."

"Earnest, Will?"

"As I am a sinful man."

"Well done, young hawk of the White Cliff!"

"I had rather have called it Gallantry Bower still, though," said Will, punning on the double name of the noble precipice which forms the highest point of the deer park.

"Well, as long as you are on land, you know it is Gallantry Bower still: but we always call it White Cliff when you see it from the sea-board, as you and I shall do, I hope, to-morrow evening."

"What, so soon?"

"Dare we lose a day?"

"I suppose not: heigh-ho!"

And they rode on again in silence, Amyas in the meanwhile being not a little content (in spite of his late self-renunciation) to find that one of his rivals at least was going to raise the siege of the Rose garden for a few months, and withdraw his forces to the coast of Kerry.

As they went over Bursdon, Amyas pulled up suddenly.

"Did you not hear a horse's step on our left?"

"On our left—coming up from Welsford moor? Impossible at this time of night. It must have been a stag, or a sownder of wild swine: or may be only an old cow."

"It was the ring of iron, friend. Let us stand and watch."

Bursdon and Welsford were then, as now, a rolling range of dreary moors, unbroken by tor or tree, or anything save few and far between a world-old furze-bank which marked the common rights of some distant cattle farm, and crossed then, not as now, by a decent road, but by a rough confused trackway, the remnant of an old Roman road from Clovelly dikes to Launceston. To the left it trended down towards a lower range of moors, which form the water-shed of the heads of Torridge; and thither the two young men peered down over the expanse of bog and furze, which glittered for miles beneath the moon, one sheet of frosted silver, in the heavy autumn dew.

"If any of Eustace's party are trying to get home from Freshwater, they might save a couple of miles by coming across Welsford, instead of going by the main track, as we have done." So said Amyas, who though (luckily for him) no "genius," was cunning as a fox in all matters of tactic and practic, and would have in these days proved his right to be considered an intellectual person by being a thorough man of business.

"If any of his party are mad, they'll try it, and be stogged till the day of judgment. There are bogs in the bottom twenty feet deep. Plague on the fellow whoever he is, he has dodged us! Look there!"

It was too true. The unknown horseman had evidently dismounted below, and led his horse up on the other side of a long furze-dike; till coming to the point where it turned away again from his intended course, he appeared against the sky, in the act of leading his nag over a gap.

"Ride like the wind!" and both youths galloped across furze and heather at him; but ere they were within a hundred yards of him, he had leapt again on his horse, and was away far ahead.

"There is the dor to us, with a vengeance," cried Cary, putting in the spurs.

"It is but a lad; we shall never catch him."

"I'll try, though; and do you lumber after as you can, old heavysides;" and Cary pushed forward.

Amyas lost sight of him for ten minutes, and then came up with him dismounted, and feeling disconsolately at his horse's knees.

"Look for my head. It lies somewhere about among the furze there; and oh! I am as full of needles as ever was a pin-cushion."

"Are his knees broken?"

"I daren't look. No, I believe not. Come along, and make the best of a bad matter. The fellow is a mile ahead, and to the right, too."

"He is going for Moorwinstow, then; but where is my cousin?"

"Behind us, I dare say. We shall nab him at least."

"Cary, promise me that if we do, you will keep out of sight, and let me manage him."

"My boy, I only want Evan Morgans and Morgan Evans. He is but the cat's-paw, and we are after the cats themselves."

And so they went on another dreary six miles, till the land trended downwards, showing dark glens and masses of woodland far below.

"Now, then, straight to Chapel, and stop the foxes' earth? Or through the King's park to Stow, and get out Sir Richard's hounds, hue and cry, and Queen's warrant in proper form?"

"Let us see Sir Richard first; and whatsoever he decides about my uncle, I will endure as a loyal subject must."

So they rode through the King's park, while Sir Richard's colts came whinnying and staring round the intruders, and down through a rich woodland lane five hundred feet into the valley, till they could hear the brawling of the little trout-stream, and beyond, the everlasting thunder of the ocean surf.

Down through warm woods, all fragrant with dying autumn flowers, leaving far above the keen Atlantic breeze, into one of those delicious western Combes, and so past the mill, and the little knot of flower-clad cottages. In the window of one of them a light was still burning. The two young men knew well whose window that was; and both hearts beat fast; for Rose Salterne slept, or rather seemed to wake, in that chamber.

"Folks are late in Combe to-night," said Amyas, as carelessly as he could.

Cary looked earnestly at the window, and then sharply enough at Amyas; but Amyas was busy settling his stirrup; and Cary rode on, unconscious that every fibre in his companion's huge frame was trembling like his own.

"Muggy and close down here," said Amyas, who, in reality, was quite faint with his own inward struggles.

"We shall be at Stow gate in five minutes," said Cary, looking back and down longingly as his horse climbed the opposite hill; but a turn of the zigzag road hid the cottage, and the next thought was, how to effect an entrance into Stow at three in the morning without being eaten by the ban-dogs, who were already howling and growling at the sound of the horse-hoofs.

However, they got safely in, after much knocking and calling, through the postern-gate in the high west wall, into a mansion, the description whereof I must defer to the next chapter, seeing that the moon has already sunk into the Atlantic, and there is darkness over land and sea.

Sir Richard, in his long gown, was soon downstairs in the hall; the letter read, and the story told; but ere it was half finished—

"Anthony, call up a groom, and let him bring me a horse round. Gentlemen, if you will excuse me five minutes, I shall be at your service."

"You will not go alone, Richard?" asked Lady Grenvile, putting her beautiful face in its nightcoif out of an adjoining door.

"Surely, sweet chuck, we three are enough to take two poor polecats of Jesuits. Go in, and help me to boot and gird."

In half an hour they were down and up across the valley again, under the few low ashes clipt flat by the sea-breeze which stood round the lonely gate of Chapel.

"Mr. Cary, there is a back path across the downs to Marsland; go and guard that." Cary rode off; and Sir Richard, as he knocked loudly at the gate—

"Mr. Leigh, you see that I have consulted your honour, and that of your poor uncle, by adventuring thus alone. What will you have me do now, which may not be unfit for me and you?"

"Oh, sir!" said Amyas, with tears in his honest eyes, "you have shown yourself once more what you always have been—my dear and beloved master on earth, not second even to my admiral Sir Francis Drake."

"Or the Queen, I hope," said Grenvile, smiling, "but *pocas palabras*. What will you do?"

"My wretched cousin, sir, may not have returned

—and if I might watch for him on the main road—unless you want me with you."

"Richard Grenvile can walk alone, lad. But what will you do with your cousin?"

"Send him out of the country, never to return; or if he refuses, run him through on the spot."

"Go, lad." And as he spoke, a sleepy voice asked inside the gate, "Who was there?"

"Sir Richard Grenvile. Open, in the Queen's name?"

"Sir Richard? He is in bed, and be hanged to you. No honest folk come at this hour of night."

"Amyas!" shouted Sir Richard. Amyas rode back.

"Burst that gate for me, while I hold your horse."

Amyas leaped down, took up a rock from the road-side, such as Homer's heroes used to send at each other's heads, and in an instant the door was flat on the ground, and the serving-man on his back inside, while Sir Richard quietly entering over it, like Una into the hut, told the fellow to get up and hold his horse for him (which the clod, who knew well enough that terrible voice, did without further murmurs), and then strode straight to the front door. It was already opened. The household had been up and about all along, or the noise at the entry had aroused them.

Sir Richard knocked, however, at the open door; and, to his astonishment, his knock was answered by Mr. Leigh himself, fully dressed, and candle in hand.

"Sir Richard Grenvile! What, sir! is this neighbourly, not to say gentle, to break into my house in the dead of night?"

"I broke your outer door, sir, because I was refused entrance when I asked in the Queen's name. I knocked at your inner one, as I should have knocked at the poorest cottager's in the parish, because I found it open. You have two Jesuits here, sir! and here is the Queen's warrant for apprehending them. I have signed it with my own hand, and, moreover, serve it now, with my own hand, in order to save you scandal—and it may be, worse. I must have these men, Mr. Leigh."

"My dear Sir Richard!——"

"I must have them, or I must search the house; and you would not put either yourself or me to so shameful a necessity?"

"My dear Sir Richard!——"

"Must I, then, ask you to stand back from your own doorway, my dear sir?" said Grenvile. And then changing his voice to that fearful lion's roar, for which he was famous, and which it seemed impossible that lips so delicate could utter, he thundered, "Knaves behind there! Back!"

This was spoken to half-a-dozen grooms and serving-men, who, well armed, were clustered in the passage.

"What? swords out, you sons of cliff rabbits?" And in a moment, Sir Richard's long blade flashed out also, and putting Mr. Leigh gently aside, as if he had been a child, he walked up to the party, who vanished right and left; having expected a cur dog, in the shape of a parish constable, and come upon a lion instead. They were stout fellows enough, no doubt, in a fair fight: but they had no stomach to be hanged in a row at Launceston Castle, after a pre-

liminary running through the body by that redoubted admiral and most unpeaceful justice of the peace.

"And now, my dear Mr. Leigh," said Sir Richard, as blandly as ever, "where are my men? The night is cold; and you, as well as I, need to be in our beds."

"The men, Sir Richard—the Jesuits—they are not here, indeed."

"Not here, sir?"

"On the word of a gentleman, they left my house an hour ago. Believe me, sir, they did. I will swear to you, if you need."

"I believe Mr. Leigh of Chapel's word without oaths. Whither are they gone?"

"Nay, sir—how can I tell? they are—they are, as I may say, fled, sir; escaped."

"With your connivance; at least with your son's. Where are they gone?"

"As I live, I do not know."

"Mr. Leigh—is this possible? Can you add untruth to that treason from the punishment of which I am trying to shield you?"

Poor Mr. Leigh burst into tears.

"Oh! my God! my God! is it come to this? Over and above having the fear and anxiety of keeping these black rascals in my house, and having to stop their villanous mouths every minute, for fear they should hang me and themselves, I am to be called a traitor and a liar in my old age, and that, too, by Richard Grenville! Would God I had never been born! Would God I had no soul to be saved, and I'd just go and drown care in drink, and let the

Queen and the Pope fight it out their own way!" And the poor old man sank into a chair, and covered his face with his hands, and then leaped up again.

"Bless my heart! Excuse me, Sir Richard—to sit down and leave you standing. 'Slife, sir, sorrow is making a hawbuck of me. Sit down, my dear sir! my worshipful sir! or rather, come with me into my room, and hear a poor wretched man's story, for I swear before God the men are fled; and my poor boy Eustace is not home either, and the groom tells me that his devil of a cousin has broken his jaw for him; and his mother is all but mad this hour past. Good lack! good lack!"

"He nearly murdered his angel of a cousin, sir!" said Sir Richard severely.

"What, sir? They never told me."

"He had stabbed his cousin Frank three times, sir, before Amyas, who is as noble a lad as walks God's earth, struck him down. And in defence of what, forsooth, did he play the ruffian and the swashbuckler, but to bring home to your house this letter, sir, which you shall hear at your leisure, the moment I have taken order about your priests." And walking out of the house, he went round and called to Cary to come to him."

"The birds are flown, Will," whispered he. "There is but one chance for us, and that is Marsland Mouth. If they are trying to take boat there, you may be yet in time. If they are gone inland we can do nothing till we raise the hue and cry to-morrow."

And Will galloped off over the downs toward Marsland, while Sir Richard ceremoniously walked in again, and professed himself ready and happy to have the honour of an audience in Mr. Leigh's private chamber. And as we know pretty well already what was to be discussed therein, we had better go over to Marsland Mouth, and, if possible, arrive there before Will Cary: seeing that he arrived hot and swearing, half an hour too late.

Note.—I have shrunk somewhat from giving these and other sketches (true and accurate as I believe them to be) of Ireland during Elizabeth's reign, when the tyranny and lawlessness of the feudal chiefs had reduced the island to such a state of weakness and barbarism, that it was absolutely necessary for England either to crush the Norman-Irish nobility, and organise some sort of law and order, or to leave Ireland an easy prey to the Spaniards, or any other nation which should go to war with us. The work was done—clumsily rather than cruelly; but wrongs were inflicted, and avenged by fresh wrongs, and those by fresh again. May the memory of them perish for ever! It has been reserved for this age, and for the liberal policy of this age, to see the last ebullitions of Celtic excitability die out harmless and ashamed of itself, and to find that the Irishman, when he is brought as a soldier under the regenerative influence of law, discipline, self-respect, and loyalty, can prove himself a worthy rival of the more stern Norse-Saxon warrior. God grant that the military brotherhood between Irish and English, which is the especial glory of the present war, may be the germ of a brotherhood industrial, political, and hereafter, perhaps, religious also; and that not merely the corpses of heroes, but the feuds and wrongs which have parted them for centuries, may lie buried, once and for ever, in the noble graves of Alma and Inkermau.

CHAPTER VI.

THE COOMBES OF THE FAR WEST.

"Far, far, from hence
The Adriatic breaks in a warm bay
Among the green Illyrian hills, and there
The sunshine in the happy glens is fair,
And by the sea, and in the brakes
The grass is cool, the sea-side air
Buoyant and fresh, the mountain flowers
More virginal and sweet than ours."

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

AND even such are those delightful glens, which cut the high table-land of the confines of Devon and Cornwall, and opening each through its gorge of down and rock, towards the boundless Western Ocean. Each is like the other, and each is like no other English scenery. Each has its upright walls, inland of rich oak-wood, nearer the sea of dark green furze, then of smooth turf, then of weird black cliffs which range out right and left far into the deep sea, in castles, spires, and wings of jagged iron-stone. Each has its narrow strip of fertile meadow, its crystal trout stream winding across and across from one hill-foot to the other; its grey stone mill, with the water sparkling and humming round the dripping wheel; its dark rock pools above the tide mark, where the salmon-trout gather in from

their Atlantic wanderings, after each autumn flood; its ridge of blown sand, bright with golden trefoil and crimson lady's finger; its grey bank of polished pebbles, down which the stream rattles toward the sea below. Each has its black field of jagged shark's-tooth rock which paves the cove from side to side, streaked with here and there a pink line of shell sand, and laced with white foam from the eternal surge, stretching in parallel lines out to the westward, in strata set upright on edge, or tilted towards each other at strange angles by primeval earthquakes;—such is the "Mouth"—as those coves are called; and such the jaw of teeth which they display, one rasp of which would grind abroad the timbers of the stoutest ship. To landward, all richness, softness, and peace; to seaward, a waste and howling wilderness of rock and roller, barren to the fisherman, and hopeless to the shipwrecked mariner.

In only one of these "Mouths" is a landing for boats, made possible by a long sea-wall of rock, which protects it from the rollers of the Atlantic; and that Mouth is Marsland, the abode of the White Witch, Lucy Passmore; whither, as Sir Richard Grenvile rightly judged, the Jesuits were gone. But before the Jesuits came, two other persons were standing on that lonely beach, under the bright October moon, namely, Rose Salterne and the White Witch herself; for Rose, fevered with curiosity and superstition, and allured by the very wildness and possible danger of the spell, had kept her appointment; and, a few minutes before midnight, stood on the grey shingle beach with her counsellor.

"You be safe enough here to-night, Miss. My old man is snoring sound abed, and there's no other soul ever sets foot here o'nights, except it be the mermaids now and then. Goodness Father, where's our boat? It ought to be up here on the pebbles."

Rose pointed to a strip of sand some forty yards nearer the sea, where the boat lay.

"Oh, the lazy old villain! he's been round the rocks after pollock this evening, and never taken the trouble to hale the boat up. I'll trounce him for it when I get home. I only hope he's made her fast where she is, that's all! He's more plague to me than ever my money will be. O deary me!"

And the goodwife bustled down toward the boat, with Rose behind her.

"Iss, 'tis fast, sure enough: and the oars aboard too! Well, I never! Oh, the lazy thief, to leave they here to be stole! I'll just sit in the boat, dear, and watch mun, while you go down to the say; for you must be all alone to yourself you know, or you'll see nothing. There's the looking-glass; now go, and dip your head three times, and mind you don't look to land or sea before you've said the words, and looked upon the glass. Now, be quick, it's just upon midnight."

And she coiled herself up in the boat, while Rose went faltering down the strip of sand, some twenty yards farther, and there slipping off her clothes, stood shivering and trembling for a moment before she entered the sea.

She was between two walls of rock: that on her

left hand, some twenty feet high, hid her in deepest shade; that on her right, though much lower, took the whole blaze of the midnight moon. Great festoons of live and purple sea-weed hung from it, shading dark cracks and crevices, fit haunts for all the goblins of the sea. On her left hand, the peaks of the rock frowned down ghastly black; on her right hand, far aloft, the downs slept bright and cold.

The breeze had died away; not even a roller broke the perfect stillness of the cove. The gulls were all asleep upon the ledges. Over all was a true autumn silence; a silence which may be heard. She stood awed, and listened in hope of a sound which might tell her that any living thing beside herself existed.

There was a faint bleat, as of a new-born lamb, high above her head; she started and looked up. Then a wail from the cliffs, as of a child in pain, answered by another from the opposite rocks. They were but the passing snipe, and the otter calling to her brood; but to her they were mysterious, supernatural goblins, come to answer to her call. Nevertheless, they only quickened her expectation; and the witch had told her not to fear them. If she performed the rite duly, nothing would harm her: but she could hear the beating of her own heart, as she stepped, mirror in hand, into the cold water, waded hastily, as far as she dare, and then stopped aghast.

A ring of flame was round her waist; every limb was bathed in lambent light; all the multitudinous life of the autumn sea, stirred by her approach, had flashed suddenly into glory;

"And around her the lamps of the sea nymphs,
Myriad fiery globes, swam heaving and panting, and rainbows,
Crimson and azure and emerald, were broken in star-showers, lighting
Far through the wine-dark depths of the crystal, the gardens of Nereus,
Coral and sea-fan and tangle, the blooms and the palms of the ocean."

She could see every shell which crawled on the white sand at her feet, every rock-fish which played in and out of the crannies, and stared at her with its broad bright eyes; while the great palmate oarweeds which waved along the chasm, half-seen in the glimmering water, seemed to beckon her down with long brown hands to a grave amid their chilly bowers. She turned to flee: but she had gone too far now to retreat; hastily dipping her head three times, she hurried out to the sea-marge, and looking through her dripping locks at the magic mirror, pronounced the incantation—

"A maiden pure, here I stand,
Neither on sea nor yet on land;
Angels watch me on either hand.
If you be landsman, come down the strand;
If you be sailor, come up the sand;
If you be angel, come from the sky,
Look in my glass, and pass me by.
Look in my glass, and go from the shore;
Leave me, but love me for evermore."

The incantation was hardly finished; her eyes were straining into the mirror, where, as may be supposed, nothing appeared but the sparkle of the drops from her own tresses, when she heard rattling down the pebbles the hasty feet of men and horses.

She darted into a cavern of the high rock, and hastily dressed herself: the steps held on right to the boat. Peeping out, half-dead with terror, she saw there four men, two of whom had just leaped from their horses, and turning them adrift, began to help the other two in running the boat down.

Whereon, out of the stern sheets, arose, like an angry ghost, the portly figure of Lucy Passmore, and shrieked in shrillest treble—

"Eh! ye villains, ye roogs, what do ye want staling poor folks' boats by night like this?"

The whole party recoiled in terror, and one turned to run up the beach, shouting at the top of his voice, "'Tis a marmaiden—a marmaiden asleep in Willy Passmore's boat!"

"I wish it were any sich good luck," she could hear Will say; "'tis my wife, oh dear!" and he cowered down, expecting the hearty cuff which he received duly, as the White Witch, leaping out of the boat, dared any man to touch it, and thundered to her husband to go home to bed.

The wily dame, as Rose well guessed, was keeping up this delay chiefly to gain time for her pupil: but she had also more solid reasons for making the fight as hard as possible; for she, as well as Rose, had already discerned in the ungainly figure of one of the party the same suspicious Welsh gentleman, on whose calling she had divined long ago; and she was so loyal a subject as to hold in extreme horror her husband's meddling with such "Popish skulkers" (as she called the whole party roundly to their face)—

unless on consideration of a very handsome sum of money. In vain Parsons thundered, Campian entreated, Mr. Leigh's groom swore, and her husband danced round in an agony of mingled fear and covetousness.

"No," she cried, "as I am an honest woman and loyal! This is why you left the boat down to the shoore, you old traitor, you, is it? To help off sich noxious trade as this out of the hands of her Majesty's quorum and rotulorum? Eh? Stand back, cowards! Will you strike a woman?"

This last speech (as usual) was merely indicative of her intention to strike the men; for, getting out one of the oars, she swung it round and round fiercely, and at last caught Father Parsons such a crack across the shins, that he retreated with a howl.

"Lucy, Lucy!" shrieked her husband, in shrillest Devon falsetto, "be you mazed? Be you mazed, lass? They promised me two gold nobles before I'd lend them the boot!"

"Tu?" shrieked the matron, with a tone of ineffable scorn. "And do yu call yourself a man?"

"Tu nobles! tu nobles!" shrieked he again, hopping about at oar's length.

"Tu? And would you sell your soul under ten?"

"Oh, if that is it," cried poor Campian, "give her ten, give her ten, brother Pars—Morgans, I mean; and take care of your shins, 'Offa Cerbero,' you know —Oh, virago! 'Furens quid fœmina possit;' Certainly she is some Lamia, some Gorgon, some——"

"Take that, for your Lamys and Gorgons to an

honest woman!" and in a moment poor Campian's thin legs were cut from under him, while the virago, "mounting on his trunk astride," like that more famous one on Hudibras, cried, "Ten nobles, or I'll kep ye here till morning!" And the ten nobles were paid into her hand.

And now the boat, its dragon guardian being pacified, was run down to the sea, and close past the nook where poor little Rose was squeezing herself into the farthest and darkest corner, among wet sea-weed and rough barnacles, holding her breath as they approached.

They passed her, and the boat's keel was already in the water; Lucy had followed them close, for reasons of her own, and perceiving close to the water's edge a dark cavern, cunningly surmised that it contained Rose, and planted her ample person right across its mouth, while she grumbled at her husband, the strangers, and above all at Mr. Leigh's groom, to whom she prophesied pretty plainly Launceston gaol and the gallows; while the wretched serving-man, who would as soon have dared to leap off Welcombe Cliff, as to return railing for railing to the White Witch, in vain entreated her mercy, and tried, by all possible dodging, to keep one of the party between himself and her, lest her redoubted eye should "overlook" him once more to his ruin.

But the night's adventures were not ended yet; for just as the boat was launched, a faint halloo was heard upon the beach, and a minute after, a horseman plunged down the pebbles, and along the sand, and pulling his

horse up on its haunches close to the terrified group, dropped, rather than leaped, from the saddle.

The serving-man, though he dared not tackle a witch, knew well enough how to deal with a swordsman; and drawing, sprang upon the new comer: and then recoiled—

"God forgive me, it's Mr. Eustace! Oh, dear sir, I took you for one of Sir Richard's men! Oh, sir, you're hurt!"

"A scratch, a scratch!" almost moaned Eustace. "Help me into the boat, Jack. Gentlemen, I must with you."

"Not with us, surely, my dear son, vagabonds upon the face of the earth?" said kind-hearted Campian.

"With you, for ever. All is over here. Whither God and the cause lead"—and he staggered toward the boat.

As he passed Rose, she saw his ghastly bleeding face, half bound up with a handkerchief, which could not conceal the convulsions of rage, shame, and despair, which twisted it from all its usual beauty. His eyes glared wildly round—and once, right into the cavern. They met hers, so full, and keen, and dreadful, that forgetting she was utterly invisible, the terrified girl was on the point of shrieking aloud.

"He has overlooked me!" said she, shuddering to herself, as she recollected his threat of yesterday.

"Who has wounded you?" asked Campian.

"My cousin—Amyas—and taken the letter!"

"The devil take him, then!" cried Parsons, stamping up and down upon the sand in fury.

"Ay, curse him—you may! I dare not! He saved me—sent me here!"—and, with a groan, he made an effort to enter the boat.

"Oh, my dear young gentleman," cried Lucy Passmore, her woman's heart bursting out at the sight of pain, "you must not goo forth with a grane wound like to that. Do ye let me just bind mun up—do ye now!" and she advanced.

Eustace thrust her back.

"No! better bear it. I deserve it—devils! I deserve it! On board, or we shall all be lost—William Cary is close behind me!"

And at that news the boat was thrust into the sea, faster than ever it went before, and only in time; for it was but just round the rocks, and out of sight, when the rattle of Cary's horsehoofs was heard above.

"That rascal of Mr. Leigh's will catch it now, the Popish villain!" said Lucy Passmore aloud. "You lie still there, dear life, and settle your sperrits; you'm so safe as ever was rabbit to burrow. I'll see what happens, if I die for it!" And so saying, she squeezed herself up through a cleft to a higher ledge, from whence she could see what passed in the valley.

"There mun is! in the meadow, trying to catch the horses! There comes Mr. Cary! Goodness Father, how a rid'th! he 's over wall already! Ron, Jack! ron then! A'll get to the river! No, a waint! Goodness Father! There's Mr. Cary cotched mun! A's down, a's down!"

"Is he dead?" asked Rose, shuddering.

"Iss, fegs, dead as nits! and Mr. Cary off his horse,

standing overthwart mun! No, a baint! A's up now. Suspose he was hit wi' the flat. Whatever is Mr. Cary tu? Telling wi' mun, a bit. O dear, dear, dear!"

"Has he killed him?" cried poor Rose.

"No, fegs, no! kecking mun, kecking mun, so hard as ever was futeball! Goodness Father, who did ever? If a haven't kecked mun right into river, and got on mun's horse and rod away!"

And so saying, down she came again.

"And now then, my dear life, us be better to goo hoom and get you sommat warm. You'm mortal cold, I rackon, by now. I was cruel fear'd for ye: but I kept mun off clever, didn't I, now?"

"I wish—I wish I had not seen Mr. Leigh's face!"

"Iss, dreadful, weren't it, poor young soul; a sad night for his poor mother!"

"Lucy, I can't get his face out of my mind. I'm sure he overlooked me."

"O then! who ever heard the like o' that? When young gentlemen do overlook young ladies, tain't thikketheor aways, I knoo. Never you think on it."

"But I can't help thinking of it," said Rose. "Stop. Shall we go home yet? Where's that servant?"

"Never mind, he waint see us, here under the hill. I'd much sooner to know where my old man was. I've a sort of a forecasting in my inwards, like, as I always has when aught's gwain to happen, as though I shuldn't zee mun again, like, I have, Miss. Well—he was a bedient old soul, after all, he was. Goodness,

Father! and all this while us have forgot the very thing us come about! Who did you see?"

"Only that face!" said Rose, shuddering.

"Not in the glass, maid? Say then, not in the glass?"

"Would to heaven it had been! Lucy, what if he were the man I was fated to——"

"He? Why he's a praste, a Popish praste, that can't marry if he would, poor wratch."

"He is none; and I have cause enough to know it!" And, for want of a better confidant, Rose poured into the willing ears of her companion the whole story of yesterday's meeting.

"He's a pretty wooer!" said Lucy at last, contemptuously. "Be a brave maid, then, be a brave maid, and never terrify yourself with his unlucky face. It's because there was none here worthy of ye, that ye seed none in glass. Maybe he's to be a foreigner, from over seas, and that's why his sperit was so long a coming. A duke, or a prince to the least, I'll warrant, he'll be, that carries off the Rose of Bideford."

But in spite of all the good dame's flattery, Rose could not wipe that fierce face away from her eyeballs. She reached home safely, and crept to bed undiscovered: and when the next morning, as was to be expected, found her laid up with something very like a fever, from excitement, terror, and cold, the phantom grew stronger and stronger before her, and it required all her woman's tact and self-restraint to avoid betraying by her exclamations what had happened on

that fantastic night. After a fortnight's weakness, however, she recovered and went back to Bideford: but ere she arrived there, Amyas was far across the seas on his way to Milford Haven, as shall be told in the ensuing chapters.

CHAPTER VII.

THE TRUE AND TRAGICAL HISTORY OF MR. JOHN OXENHAM OF PLYMOUTH.

"The fair breeze blew, the white foam flew;
The furrow follow'd free;
We were the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea."
THE ANCIENT MARINER.

IT was too late and too dark last night to see the old house at Stow. We will look round us, then, this bright October day, while Sir Richard and Amyas, about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, are pacing up and down the terraced garden to the south. Amyas has slept till luncheon, *i.e.* till an hour ago: but Sir Richard, in spite of the bustle of last night, was up and in the valley by six o'clock, recreating the valiant souls of himself and two terrier dogs by the chase of sundry badgers.

Old Stow House stands, or rather stood, some four miles beyond the Cornish border, on the northern slope of the largest and loveliest of those coombes of which I spoke in the last chapter. Eighty years after Sir Richard's time, there arose there a huge Palladian pile, bedizened with every monstrosity of bad taste, which was built, so the story runs, by Charles the

Second, for Sir Richard's great grandson, the heir of that famous Sir Bevil who defeated the Parliamentary troops at Stratton, and died soon after, fighting valiantly at Lansdowne over Bath. But, like most other things which owed their existence to the Stuarts, it rose only to fall again. An old man who had seen, as a boy, the foundation of the new house laid, lived to see it pulled down again, and the very bricks and timber sold upon the spot; and since then the stables have become a farm-house, the tennis-court a sheep-cote, the great quadrangle a rick-yard; and civilisation, spreading wave on wave so fast elsewhere, has surged back from that lonely corner of the land—let us hope, only for a while.

But I am not writing of that great new Stow House, of the past glories whereof quaint pictures still hang in the neighbouring houses; nor of that famed Sir Bevil, most beautiful and gallant of his generation, on whom, with his grandfather Sir Richard, old Prince has his pompous epigram—

> "Where next shall famous Grenvil's ashes stand?
> Thy grandsire fills the sea, and thou the land."

I have to deal with a simpler age, and a sterner generation; and with the old house, which had stood there, in part at least, from grey and mythic ages, when the first Sir Richard, son of Hamon Dentatus, Lord of Carboyle, the grandson of Duke Robert, son of Rou, settled at Bideford, after slaying the Prince of South-Galis, and the Lord of Glamorgan, and gave to the Cistercian monks of Neath all his conquests in South Wales. It was a huge rambling building, half

castle, half dwelling-house, such as may be seen still (almost an unique specimen) in Compton Castle near Torquay, the dwelling-place of Humphrey Gilbert, Walter Raleigh's half-brother, and Richard Grenvile's bosom friend, of whom more hereafter. On three sides, to the north, west, and south, the lofty walls of the old ballium still stood, with their machicolated turrets, loopholes, and dark downward crannies for dropping stones and fire on the besiegers, the relics of a more unsettled age: but the southern court of the ballium had become a flower-garden, with quaint terraces, statues, knots of flowers, clipped yews and hollies, and all the pedantries of the topiarian art. And toward the east, where the vista of the valley opened, the old walls were gone, and the frowning Norman keep, ruined in the wars of the Roses, had been replaced by the rich and stately architecture of the Tudors. Altogether, the house, like the time, was in a transitionary state, and represented faithfully enough the passage of the old middle age into the new life which had just burst into blossom throughout Europe, never, let us pray, to see its autumn or its winter.

From the house on three sides, the hill sloped steeply down, and the garden where Sir Richard and Amyas were walking gave a truly English prospect. At one turn they could catch, over the western walls, a glimpse of the blue ocean flecked with passing sails; and at the next, spread far below them, range on range of fertile park, stately avenue, yellow autumn woodland, and purple heather moors, lapping over

and over each other up the valley to the old British earthwork, which stood black and furze-grown on its conical peak; and standing out against the sky on the highest bank of hill which closed the valley to the east, the lofty tower of Kilkhampton church, rich with the monuments and offerings of five centuries of Grenviles. A yellow eastern haze hung soft over park, and wood, and moor; the red cattle lowed to each other as they stood brushing away the flies in the rivulet far below; the colts in the horse-park close on their right whinnied as they played together, and their sires from the Queen's park, on the opposite hill, answered them in fuller though fainter voices. A rutting stag made the still woodland rattle with his hoarse thunder, and a rival far up the valley gave back a trumpet note of defiance, and was himself defied from heathery brows which quivered far away above, half seen through the veil of eastern mist. And close at home, upon the terrace before the house, amid romping spaniels and golden-haired children, sat Lady Grenvile herself, the beautiful St. Leger of Annery, the central jewel of all that glorious place, and looked down at her noble children, and then up at her more noble husband, and round at that broad paradise of the west, till life seemed too full of happiness, and heaven of light.

And all the while up and down paced Amyas and Sir Richard, talking long, earnestly, and slow; for they both knew that the turning point of the boy's life was come.

"Yes," said Sir Richard, after Amyas, in his blunt

simple way, had told him the whole story about Rose Salterne and his brother,—"yes, sweet lad, thou hast chosen the better part, thou and thy brother also, and it shall not be taken from you. Only be strong, lad, and trust in God that He will make a man of you."

"I do trust," said Amyas.

"Thank God," said Sir Richard, "that you have yourself taken from my heart that which was my great anxiety for you, from the day that your good father, who sleeps in peace, committed you to my hands. For all best things, Amyas, become, when misused, the very worst; and the love of woman, because it is able to lift man's soul to the heavens, is also able to drag him down to hell. But you have learnt better, Amyas; and know, with our old German forefathers, that as Tacitus saith, 'Sera juvenum Venus, ideoque inexhausta pubertas.' And not only that Amyas; but trust me, that silly fashion of the French and Italians, to be hanging ever at some woman's apron string, so that no boy shall count himself a man unless he can 'vagghezziare le donne,' whether maids or wives, alas! matters little; that fashion, I say, is little less hurtful to the soul than open sin; for by it are bred vanity and expense, envy and heartburning, yea, hatred and murder often; and even if that be escaped, yet the rich treasure of a manly worship, which should be kept for one alone, is squandered and parted upon many, and the bride at last comes in for nothing but the very last leavings and *caput mortuum* of her bridegroom's heart, and becomes a mere ornament for his table, and a means

whereby he may obtain a progeny. May God, who has saved me from that death in life, save you also!" And as he spoke, he looked down toward his wife upon the terrace below; and she, as if guessing instinctively that he was talking of her, looked up with so sweet a smile, that Sir Richard's stern face melted into a very glory of spiritual sunshine.

Amyas looked at them both and sighed; and then turning the conversation suddenly—

"And I may go to Ireland to-morrow?"

"You shall sail in the 'Mary' for Milford Haven, with these letters to Winter. If the wind serves, you may bid the master drop down the river to-night, and be off; for we must lose no time."

"Winter?" said Amyas. "He is no friend of mine, since he left Drake and us so cowardly at the Straits of Magellan."

"Duty must not wait for private quarrels, even though they be just ones, lad: but he will not be your general. When you come to the Marshal, or the Lord Deputy, give either of them this letter, and they will set you work,—and hard work too, I warrant."

"I want nothing better."

"Right, lad; the best reward for having wrought well already, is to have more to do; and he that has been faithful over a few things, must find his account in being made ruler over many things. That is the true and heroical rest, which only is worthy of gentlemen and sons of God. As for those who, either in this world or the world to come, look for idleness, and hope that God shall feed them with pleasant

things, as it were with a spoon, Amyas, I count them cowards and base, even though they call themselves saints and elect."

"I wish you could persuade my poor cousin of that."

"He has yet to learn what losing his life to save it means, Amyas. Bad men have taught him (and I fear these Anabaptists and Puritans at home teach little else), that it is the one great business of every one to save his own soul after he dies, every one for himself; and that that, and not divine self-sacrifice, is the one thing needful, and the better part which Mary chose."

"I think men are inclined enough already to be selfish, without being taught that."

"Right, lad. For me, if I could hang up such a teacher on high as an enemy of mankind, and a corrupter of youth, I would do it gladly. Is there not cowardice and self-seeking enough about the hearts of us fallen sons of Adam, that these false prophets, with their baits of heaven, and their terrors of hell, must exalt our dirtiest vices into heavenly virtues and the means of bliss? Farewell to chivalry and to desperate valour, farewell to patriotism and loyalty, farewell to England and to the manhood of England, if once it shall become the fashion of our preachers to bid every man, as the Jesuits do, take care first of what they call the safety of his soul. Every man will be afraid to die at his post, because he will be afraid that he is not fit to die. Amyas, do thou do thy duty like a man, to thy country, thy queen, and thy God; and count thy life a worthless thing, as did the holy men

of old. Do thy work, lad; and leave thy soul to the care of Him who is just and merciful in this, that He rewards every man according to his work. Is there respect of persons with God? Now come in, and take the letters, and to horse. And if I hear of thee dead there at Smerwick fort, with all thy wounds in front, I shall weep for thy mother, lad: but I shall have never a sigh for thee."

If any one shall be startled at hearing a fine gentleman and a warrior like Sir Richard quote Scripture, and think Scripture also, they must be referred to the writings of the time; which they may read not without profit to themselves, if they discover therefrom how it was possible then for men of the world to be thoroughly ingrained with the Gospel, and yet to be free from any taint of superstitious fear, or false devoutness. The religion of those days was such as no soldier need have been ashamed of confessing. At least, Sir Richard died as he lived, without a shudder, and without a whine; and these were his last words, fifteen years after that, as he lay shot through and through, a captive among popish Spaniards, priests, crucifixes, confession, extreme unction, and all other means and appliances for delivering men out of the hands of a God of love:—

"Here die I, Richard Grenvile, with a joyful and quiet mind; for that I have ended my life as a true soldier ought, fighting for his country, queen, religion, and honour: my soul willingly departing from this body, leaving behind the lasting fame of having behaved as every valiant soldier is in his duty bound to do."

Those were the last words of Richard Grenvile. The pulpits of those days had taught them to him.

But to return. That day's events were not over yet. For, when they went down into the house, the first person whom they met was the old steward, in search of his master.

"There is a manner of roog, Sir Richard, a masterless man, at the door; a very forward fellow, and must needs speak with you."

"A masterless man? He had better not to speak to me, unless he is in love with gaol and gallows."

"Well, your worship," said the steward, "I expect that is what he does want, for he swears he will not leave the gate till he has seen you."

"Seen me? Halidame! he shall see me, here and at Launceston too, if he likes. Bring him in."

"Fegs, Sir Richard, we are half afeard, with your good leave——"

"Hillo, Tony," cried Amyas, "who was ever afeard yet with Sir Richard's good leave?"

"What, has the fellow a tail or horns?"

"Massy no: but I be afeard of treason for your honour; for the fellow is pinked all over in heathen patterns, and as brown as a filbert; and a tall roog, a very strong roog, sir, and a foreigner too, and a mighty staff with him. I expect him to be a manner of Jesuit, or wild Irish, sir; and indeed the grooms have no stomach to handle him, nor the dogs neither, or he had been under the pump before now, for they that saw him coming up the hill swear that he had fire coming out of his mouth."

"Fire out of his mouth?" said Sir Richard. "The men are drunk."

"Pinked all over? He must be a sailor," said Amyas; "let me out and see the fellow, and if he needs putting forth——"

"Why, I dare say he is not so big but what he will go into thy pocket. So go, lad, while I finish my writing."

Amyas went out, and at the back door, leaning on his staff, stood a tall, raw-boned, ragged man, "pinked all over," as the steward had said.

"Hillo, lad!" quoth Amyas. "Before we come to talk, thou wilt please to lay down that Plymouth cloak of thine." And he pointed to the cudgel, which among west-country mariners usually bore that name.

"I'll warrant," said the old steward, "that where he found his cloak he found a purse not far off."

"But not hose or doublet; so the magical virtue of his staff has not helped him much. But put down thy staff, man, and speak like a Christian, if thou be one."

"I am a Christian, though I look like a heathen; and no rogue, though a masterless man, alas! But I want nothing, deserving nothing, and only ask to speak with Sir Richard, before I go on my way."

There was something stately and yet humble about the man's tone and manner which attracted Amyas, and he asked more gently where he was going and whence he came.

"From Padstow Port, sir, to Clovelly town, to see my old mother, if indeed she be yet alive, which God knoweth."

"Clovally man! why didn't thee say thee was Clovally man?" asked all the grooms at once, to whom a west countryman was of course a brother. The old steward asked,—

"What's thy mother's name, then?"

"Susan Yeo."

"What, that lived under the archway?" asked a groom.

"Lived?" said the man.

"Iss, sure; her died three days since, so we heard, poor soul."

The man stood quite silent and unmoved for a minute or two; and then said quietly to himself, in Spanish, "That which is, is best."

"You speak Spanish?" asked Amyas more and more interested.

"I had need to do so, young sir; I have been five years in the Spanish main, and only set foot on shore two days ago; and if you will let me have speech of Sir Richard, I will tell him that at which both the ears of him that heareth it shall tingle; and if not, I can but go on to Mr. Cary of Clovelly, if he be yet alive, and there disburthen my soul; but I would sooner have spoken with one that is a mariner like to myself."

"And you shall," said Amyas. "Steward, we will have this man in; for all his rags, he is a man of wit." And he led him in.

"I only hope he ben't one of those popish murderers," said the old steward, keeping at a safe distance from him, as they entered the hall.

"Popish, old master? There's little fear of my

being that. Look here!" And drawing back his rags, he showed a ghastly scar, which encircled his wrist and wound round and up his fore-arm.

"I got that on the rack," said he quietly, "in the Inquisition at Lima."

"O Father! Father! why didn't you tell us that you were a poor Christian?" asked the penitent steward.

"Because I have had nought but my deserts; and but a taste of them either, as the Lord knoweth who delivered me; and I wasn't going to make myself a beggar and a show on their account."

"By heaven, you are a brave fellow!" said Amyas. "Come along straight to Sir Richard's room."

So in they went, where Sir Richard sat in his library among books, despatches, state-papers, and warrants; for though he was not yet, as in after times (after the fashion of those days), admiral, general, member of parliament, privy councillor, justice of the peace, and so forth, all at once, yet there were few great men with whom he did not correspond, or great matters with which he was not cognisant.

"Hillo, Amyas, have you bound the wild man already, and brought him in to swear allegiance?"

But before Amyas could answer, the man looked earnestly on him—"Amyas?" said he; "is that your name, sir?"

"Amyas Leigh is my name, at your service, good fellow."

"Of Borrough by Bideford?"

"Why then? What do you know of me?"

"Oh sir, sir! young brains and happy ones have

short memories; but old and sad brains too too long ones, often! Do you mind one that was with Mr. Oxenham, sir? a swearing reprobate he was, God forgive him, and hath forgiven him too, for his dear Son's sake—one, sir, that gave you a horn, a toy with a chart on it?"

"Soul alive!" cried Amyas, catching him by the hand; "and are you he? The horn? why, I have it still, and will keep it to my dying day too. But where is Mr. Oxenham?"

"Yes, my good fellow, where is Mr. Oxenham?" asked Sir Richard, rising. "You are somewhat overhasty in welcoming your old acquaintance, Amyas, before we have heard from him whether he can give honest account of himself and of his Captain. For there is more than one way by which sailors may come home without their captains, as poor Mr. Barker of Bristol found to his cost. God grant that there may have been no such traitorous dealing here."

"Sir Richard Grenvile, if I had been a guilty man to my noble captain, as I have to God, I had not come here this day to you, from whom villany has never found favour, nor ever will; for I know your conditions well, sir; and trust in the Lord, that if you will be pleased to hear me, you shall know mine."

"Thou art a well-spoken knave. We shall see."

"My dear sir," said Amyas in a whisper, "I will warrant this man guiltless."

"I verily believe him to be; but this is too serious a matter to be left on guess. If he will be sworn——"

Whereon the man, humbly enough, said, that if it

would please Sir Richard, he would rather not be sworn.

"But it does not please me, rascal! Did I not warn thee, Amyas?"

"Sir," said the man proudly, "God forbid that my word should not be as good as my oath: but it is against my conscience to be sworn."

"What have we here? some fantastical Anabaptist, who is wiser than his teachers?"

"My conscience, sir——"

"The devil take it and thee! I never heard a man yet begin to prate of his conscience, but I knew that he was about to do something more than ordinarily cruel or false."

"Sir," said the man, coolly enough, "do you sit here to judge me according to law, and yet contrary to the law swear profane oaths, for which a fine is provided?"

Amyas expected an explosion: but Sir Richard pulled a shilling out and put it on the table. "There—my fine is paid, sirrah, to the poor of Kilkhampton: but hearken thou all the same. If thou wilt not speak on oath, thou shalt speak on compulsion; for to Launceston gaol thou goest, there to answer for Mr. Oxenham's death, on suspicion whereof, and of mutiny causing it, I will attach thee and every soul of his crew that comes home. We have lost too many gallant captains of late by treachery of their crews, and he that will not clear himself on oath, must be held for guilty, and self-condemned."

"My good fellow," said Amyas, who could not give

up his belief in the man's honesty; "why, for such fantastical scruples, peril not only your life, but your honour, and Mr. Oxenham's also? For if you be examined by question, you may be forced by torment to say that which is not true."

"Little fear of that, young sir!" answered he with a grim smile; "I have had too much of the rack already, and the strappado too, to care much what man can do unto me. I would heartily that I thought it lawful to be sworn: but not so thinking, I can but submit to the cruelty of man; though I did expect more merciful things, as a most miserable and wrecked mariner, at the hands of one who hath himself seen God's ways in the sea, and his wonders in the great deep. Sir Richard Grenvile, if you will hear my story, may God avenge on my head all my sins from my youth up until now, and cut me off from the blood of Christ, and, if it were possible, from the number of his elect, if I tell you one whit more or less than truth; and if not, I commend myself into the hands of God."

Sir Richard smiled. "Well, thou art a brave ass, and valiant, though an ass manifest. Dost thou not see, fellow, how thou hast sworn a ten-times bigger oath than ever I should have asked of thee? But this is the way with your Anabaptists, who by their very hatred of forms and ceremonies, show of how much account they think them, and then bind themselves out of their own fantastical self-will with far heavier burdens than ever the lawful authorities have laid on them for the sake of the commonweal. But what do they care for the commonweal, as long as they can

save, as they fancy, each man his own dirty soul for himself? However, thou art sworn now with a vengeance; go on with thy tale: and first, who art thou, and whence?"

"Well, sir," said the man, quite unmoved by this last explosion; "my name is Salvation Yeo, born in Clovelly Street, in the year 1526, where my father exercised the mystery of a barber surgeon, and a preacher of the people since called Anabaptists, for which I return humble thanks to God."

Sir Richard.—Fie! thou naughty knave; return thanks that thy father was an ass?

Yeo.—Nay, but because he was a barber surgeon; for I myself learnt a touch of that trade, and thereby saved my life, as I will tell presently. And I do think that a good mariner ought to have all knowledge of carnal and worldly cunning, even to tailoring and shoemaking, that he may be able to turn his hand to whatsoever may hap.

Sir Richard.—Well spoken, fellow: but let us have thy text without thy comments. Forwards!

Yeo.—Well, sir. I was bred to the sea from my youth, and was with Captain Hawkins in his three voyages, which he made to Guinea for negro slaves, and thence to the West Indies.

Sir Richard.—Then thrice thou wentest to a bad end, though Captain Hawkins be my good friend; and the last time to a bad end thou camest.

Yeo.—No denying that last, your worship: but as for the former, I doubt:—about the unlawfulness I mean; being the negroes are of the children of Ham,

who are cursed and reprobate, as Scripture declares, and their blackness testifies, being Satan's own livery; among whom therefore there can be none of the elect, wherefore the elect are not required to treat them as brethren.

Sir Richard.—What a plague of a pragmatical sea-lawyer have we here? And I doubt not, thou hypocrite, that though thou wilt call the negroes' black skin Satan's livery, when it serves thy turn to steal them, thou wilt find out sables to be Heaven's livery every Sunday, and up with a godly howl unless a parson shall preach in a black gown Geneva fashion. Out upon thee! Go on with thy tale, lest thou finish thy sermon at Launceston after all.

Yeo.—The Lord's people were always a reviled people and a persecuted people: but I will go forward, sir; for Heaven forbid but that I should declare what God has done for me. For till lately, from my youth up, I was given over to all wretchlessness and unclean living, and was by nature a child of the devil, and to every good work reprobate, even as others.

Sir Richard.—Hark to his "even as others!" Thou new-whelped Pharisee, canst not confess thine own villanies without making out others as bad as thyself, and so thyself no worse than others? I only hope that thou hast shown none of thy devil's doings to Mr. Oxenham.

Yeo.—On the word of a Christian man, sir, as I said before, I kept true faith with him, and would have been a better friend to him, sir, what is more, than ever he was to himself.

Sir Richard.—Alas! that might easily be.

Yeo.—I think, sir, and will make good against any man, that Mr. Oxenham was a noble and valiant gentleman; true of his word, stout of his sword, skilful by sea and land, and worthy to have been Lord High Admiral of England (saving your worship's presence), but that through two great sins, wrath and avarice, he was cast away miserably or ever his soul was brought to the knowledge of the truth. Ah, sir, he was a Captain worth sailing under! And Yeo heaved a deep sigh.

Sir Richard.—Steady, steady, good fellow! If thou wouldst quit preaching, thou art no fool after all. But tell us the story without more bush-beating.

So at last Yeo settled himself to his tale:—

"Well, sirs, I went, as Mr. Leigh knows, to Nombre de Dios, with Mr. Drake and Mr. Oxenham, in 1572, where what we saw and did, your worship, I suppose, knows as well as I; and there was, as you've heard may be, a covenant between Mr. Oxenham and Mr. Drake to sail the South Seas together, which they made, your worship, in my hearing, under the tree over Panama. For when Mr. Drake came down from the tree, after seeing the sea afar off, Mr. Oxenham and I went up and saw it too; and when we came down, Drake says, 'John, I have made a vow to God that I will sail that water, if I live and God gives me grace;' which he had done, sir, upon his bended knees, like a godly man as he always was, and would I had taken after him! and Mr. O. says, 'I am with you, Drake, to

live or die, and I think I know some one there already, so we shall not be quite among strangers;' and laughed withal. Well, sirs, that voyage, as you know, never came off, because Captain Drake was fighting in Ireland; so Mr. Oxenham, who must be up and doing, sailed for himself, and I who loved him, God knows, like a brother (saving the difference in our ranks), helped him to get the crew together, and went as his gunner. That was in 1575; as you know, he had a 140-ton ship, sir, and seventy men out of Plymouth and Fowey and Dartmouth, and many of them old hands of Drake's, beside a dozen or so from Bideford that I picked up when I saw young Master here."

"Thank God that you did not pick me up too."

"Amen, amen!" said Yeo, clasping his hands on his breast. "Those seventy men, sir,—seventy gallant men, sir, with every one of them an immortal soul within him,—where are they now? Gone, like the spray!" And he swept his hands abroad with a wild and solemn gesture. "And their blood is upon my head!"

Both Sir Richard and Amyas began to suspect that the man's brain was not altogether sound.

"God forbid, my man," said the Knight, kindly.

"Thirteen men I persuaded to join in Bideford town, beside William Penberthy of Marazion, my good comrade. And what if it be said to me at the day of judgment, 'Salvation Yeo, where are those fourteen whom thou didst tempt to their deaths by covetousness and lust of gold?' Not that I was alone in my sin, if the truth must be told. For all the way out Mr. Oxenham was making loud speech, after his

pleasant way, that he would make all their fortunes, and take them to such a Paradise, that they should have no lust to come home again. And I—God knows why—for every one boast of his would make two, even to lying and empty fables, and anything to keep up the men's hearts. For I had really persuaded myself that we should all find treasures beyond Solomon his temple, and Mr. Oxenham would surely show us how to conquer some golden city, or discover some island all made of precious stones. And one day, as the Captain and I were talking after our fashion, I said, 'And you shall be our king, Captain.' To which he, 'If I be, I shall not be long without a queen, and that no Indian one either.' And after that he often jested about the Spanish ladies, saying that none could show us the way to their hearts better than he. Which speeches I took no account of then, sirs: but after I minded them, whether I would or not. Well, sirs, we came to the shore of New Spain, near to the old place—that's Nombre de Dios; and there Mr. Oxenham went ashore into the woods with a boat's crew, to find the negroes who helped us three years before. Those are the Cimaroons, gentles, negro slaves who have fled from those devils incarnate, their Spanish masters, and live wild, like the beasts that perish; men of great stature, sirs, and fierce as wolves in the onslaught, but poor jabbering mazed fellows if they be but a bit dismayed; and have many Indian women with them, who take to these negroes a deal better than to their own kin, which breeds war enough, as you may guess.

"Well, sirs, after three days the Captain comes back, looking heavy enough, and says, 'We played our trick once too often, when we played it once. There is no chance of stopping another reço (that is, a mule-train, sirs) now. The Cimaroons say that since our last visit they never move without plenty of soldiers, two hundred shot at least. Therefore,' he said, 'my gallants, we must either return empty-handed from this, the very market and treasury of the whole Indies, or do such a deed as men never did before, which I shall like all the better for that very reason.' And we, asking his meaning, 'Why,' he said, if Drake will not sail the South Seas, we will;' adding profanely that Drake was like Moses, who beheld the promised land afar; but he was Joshua, who would enter into it, and smite the inhabitants thereof. And, for our confirmation, showed me and the rest the superscription of a letter: and said, 'How I came by this is none of your business: but I have had it in my bosom ever since I left Plymouth; and I tell you now, what I forebore to tell you at first, that the South Seas have been my mark all along! such news have I herein of plate-ships, and gold-ships, and what not, which will come up from Quito and Lima this very month, all which, with the pearls of the Gulf of Panama, and other wealth unspeakable, will be ours, if we have but true English hearts within us.'

"At which, gentles, we were like madmen for lust of that gold, and cheerfully undertook a toil incredible; for first we run our ship aground in a great wood which grew in the very sea itself, and then took out her

masts, and covered her in boughs, with her four cast pieces of great ordnance (of which more hereafter), and leaving no man in her, started for the South Seas across the neck of Panama, with two small pieces of ordnance and our culverins, and good store of victuals, and with us six of those negroes for a guide, and so twelve leagues to a river which runs into the South Sea.

"And there, having cut wood, we made a pinnace (and work enough we had at it), of five-and-forty foot in the keel; and in her down the stream, and to the Isle of Pearls in the Gulf of Panama."

"Into the South Sea? Impossible!" said Sir Richard. "Have a care what you say, my man; for there is that about you which would make me sorry to find you out a liar."

"Impossible or not, liar or none, we went there, sir."

"Question him, Amyas, lest he turn out to have been beforehand with you."

The man looked inquiringly at Amyas, who said,—

"Well, my man, of the Gulf of Panama I cannot ask you, for I never was inside it, but what other parts of the coast do you know?"

"Every inch, sir, from Cabo San Francisco to Lima; more is my sorrow, for I was a galley-slave there for two years and more."

"You know Lima?"

"I was there three times, worshipful gentlemen, and the last was February come two years; and there I helped lade a great plate-ship, the 'Cacafuogo,' they called her."

Amyas started. Sir Richard nodded to him gently to be silent, and then—

"And what became of her, my lad?"

"God knows, who knows all, and the devil who freighted her. I broke prison six weeks afterwards, and never heard but that she got safe into Panama."

"You never heard, then, that she was taken?"

"Taken, your worships? Who should take her?"

"Why should not a good English ship take her as well as another?" said Amyas.

"Lord love you, sir; yes faith, if they had but been there. Many's the time that I thought to myself, as we went alongside, 'Oh, if Captain Drake was but here, well to windward, and our old crew of the Dragon!' Ask your pardon, gentles: but how is Captain Drake, if I may make so bold?"

Neither could hold out longer.

"Fellow, fellow!" cried Sir Richard, springing up, "either thou art the cunningest liar that ever earned a halter, or thou hast done a deed the like of which never man adventured. Dost thou not know that Captain Drake took that 'Cacafuogo' and all her freight, in February come two years?"

"Captain Drake! God forgive me, sir; but—Captain Drake in the South Seas? He saw them, sir, from the tree-top over Panama, when I was with him, and I too; but sailed them, sir?—sailed them?"

"Yes, and round the world too," said Amyas, "and I with him; and took that very 'Cacafuogo' off Cape San Francisco, as she came up to Panama."

One glance at the man's face was enough to prove

his sincerity. The great stern Anabaptist, who had not winced at the news of his mother's death, dropt right on his knees on the floor, and burst into violent sobs.

"Glory to God! Glory to God! O Lord, I thank thee! Captain Drake in the South Seas! The blood of thy innocents avenged, O Lord! The spoiler spoiled, and the proud robbed; and all they whose hands were mighty have found nothing. Glory, Glory! Oh, tell me, sir, did she fight?"

"We gave her three pieces of ordnance only, and struck down her mizen mast, and then boarded sword in hand, but never had need to strike a blow; and before we left her, one of her own boys had changed her name, and rechristened her the 'Cacaplata.'"

"Glory, glory! Cowards they are, as I told them. I told them they never could stand the Devon mastiffs, and well they flogged me for saying it; but they could not stop my mouth. O sir, tell me, did you get the ship that came up after her?"

"What was that?"

"A long race-ship, sir, from Guayaquil, with an old gentleman on board,—Don Francisco de Xararte was his name, and by token, he had a gold falcon hanging to a chain round his neck, and a green stone in the breast of it. I saw it as we rowed him aboard. O tell me, sir, tell me for the love of God, did you take that ship?"

"We did take that ship, and the jewel too, and her Majesty has it at this very hour."

"Then tell me, sir," said he slowly, as if he dreaded

an answer; "tell me, sir, and oh, try and mind—was there a little maid aboard with the old gentleman?"

"A little maid? Let me think. No; I saw none."

The man settled his features again sadly.

"I thought not. I never saw her come aboard. Still I hoped, like; I hoped. Alackaday! God help me, Salvation Yeo!"

"What have you to do with this little maid, then, good fellow?" asked Grenvile.

"Ah, sir, before I tell you that, I must go back and finish the story of Mr. Oxenham, if you will believe me enough to hear it."

"I do believe thee, good fellow, and honour thee too."

"Then, sir, I can speak with a free tongue. Where was I?"

"Where was he, Amyas."

"At the Isle of Pearls."

"And yet, O gentles, tell me first, how Captain Drake came into the South Seas:—over the neck, as we did?"

"Through the Straits, good fellow, like any Spaniard: but go on with thy story, and thou shalt have Mr. Leigh's after."

"Through the Straits! O glory! But I'll tell my tale. Well, sirs both—To the Island of Pearls we came, we and some of the negroes. We found many huts, and Indians fishing for pearls, and also a fair house, with porches; but no Spaniard therein, save one man; at which Mr. Oxenham was like a man transported, and fell on that Spaniard, crying, 'Perro,

where is your mistress? Where is the bark from Lima?' To which he boldly enough, 'What was his mistress to the Englishman?' But Mr. O. threatened to twine a cord round his head till his eyes burst out; and the Spaniard, being terrified, said that the ship from Lima was expected in a fortnight's time. So for ten days we lay quiet, letting neither negro nor Spaniard leave the island, and took good store of pearls, feeding sumptuously on wild cattle and hogs until the tenth day, when there came by a small bark; her we took, and found her from Quito, and on board 60,000 pezos of gold and other store. With which if we had been content, gentlemen, all had gone well. And some were willing to go back at once, having both treasure and pearls in plenty; but Mr. O., he waxed right mad, and swore to slay any one who made that motion again, assuring us that the Lima ship of which he had news was far greater and richer, and would make princes of us all; which bark came in sight on the sixteenth day, and was taken without shot or slaughter. The taking of which bark, I verily believe, was the ruin of every mother's son of us."

And being asked why, he answered, "First, because of the discontent which was bred thereby; for on board was found no gold, but only 100,000 pezos of silver."

Sir Richard Grenvile.—Thou greedy fellow; and was not that enough to stay your stomachs?

Yeo answered, that he would to God it had been; but that, moreover, the weight of that silver was afterwards a hindrance to them, and a fresh cause of

discontent, as he would afterwards declare. "So that it had been well for us, sirs, if we had left it behind, as Mr. Drake left his three years before, and carried away the gold only. In which I do see the evident hand of God, and his just punishment for our greediness of gain; who caused Mr. Oxenham, by whom we had hoped to attain great wealth, to be a snare to us, and a cause of utter ruin."

"Do you think, then," said Sir Richard, "that Mr. Oxenham deceived you wilfully?"

"I will never believe that, sir: Mr. Oxenham had his private reasons for waiting for that ship, for the sake of one on board, whose face would that he had never seen, though he saw it then, as I fear, not for the first time by many a one." And so was silent.

"Come," said both his hearers, "you have brought us thus far, and you must go on."

"Gentlemen, I have concealed this matter from all men, both on my voyage home and since; and I hope you will be secret in the matter, for the honour of my noble Captain, and the comfort of his friends who are alive. For I think it shame to publish harm of a gallant gentleman, and of an ancient and worshipful family, and to me a true and kind Captain, when what is done cannot be undone, and least said soonest mended. Neither now would I have spoken of it, but that I was inwardly moved to it for the sake of that young gentleman there (looking at Amyas), that he might be warned in time of God's wrath against the crying sin of adultery, and flee youthful lusts, which war against the soul."

"Thou hast done wisely enough, then," said Sir Richard; "and look to it if I do not reward thee: but the young gentleman here, thank God, needs no such warnings, having got them already both by precept and example, where thou and poor Oxenham might have had them also."

"You mean Captain Drake, your worship?"

"I do, sirrah. If all men were as clean livers as he, the world would be spared one half the tears that are shed in it."

"Amen, sir. At least there would have been many a tear spared to us and ours. For—as all must out—in that bark of Lima he took a young lady, as fair as the sunshine, sir, and seemingly about two or three-and-twenty years of age, having with her a tall young lad of sixteen, and a little girl, a marvellously pretty child, of about a six or seven. And the lady herself was of an excellent beauty, like a whale's tooth for whiteness, so that all the crew wondered at her, and could not be satisfied with looking upon her. And, gentlemen, this was strange, that the lady seemed in no wise afraid or mournful, and bid her little girl fear nought, as did also Mr. Oxenham: but the lad kept a very sour countenance, and the more when he saw the lady and Mr. Oxenham speaking together apart.

"Well, sir, after this good luck we were minded to have gone straight back to the river whence we came, and so home to England with all speed. But Mr. Oxenham persuaded us to return to the island, and get a few more pearls. To which foolishness

(which after caused the mishap) I verily believe he was moved by the instigation of the devil and of that lady. For as we were about to go ashore, I, going down into the cabin of the prize, saw Mr. Oxenham and that lady making great cheer of each other with, 'My life,' and 'My king,' and 'Light of my eyes,' and such toys; and being bidden by Mr. Oxenham to fetch out the lady's mails, and take them ashore, heard how the two laughed together about the old ape of Panama (which ape, or devil rather, I saw afterwards to my cost), and also how she said, that she had been dead for five years, and now that Mr. Oxenham was come, she was alive again, and so forth.

"Mr. Oxenham bade take the little maid ashore, kissing her and playing with her, and saying to the lady, 'What is yours is mine, and what is mine is yours.' And she asking whether the lad should come ashore, he answered, 'He is neither yours nor mine; let the spawn of Beelzebub stay on shore.' After which I, coming on deck again, stumbled over that very lad, upon the hatchway ladder, who bore so black and despiteful a face, that I verily believe he had overheard their speech, and so thrust him upon deck; and going below again, told Mr. Oxenham what I thought, and said that it were better to put a dagger into him at once, professing to be ready so to do. For which grievous sin, seeing that it was committed in my unregenerate days, I hope I have obtained the grace of forgiveness, as I have that of hearty repentance. But the lady cried out, 'Though he be none of mine, I have sin enough already on my soul;' and

so laid her hand on Mr. Oxenham's mouth, entreating pitifully. And Mr. Oxenham answered laughing, when she would let him, 'What care we? let the young monkey go and howl to the old one;' and so went ashore with the lady to that house, whence for three days he never came forth, and would have remained longer, but that the men, finding but few pearls, and being wearied with the watching and warding so many Spaniards, and negroes came clamouring to him, and swore that they would return or leave him there with the lady. So all went on board the pinnace again, every one in ill humour with the Captain, and he with them.

"Well, sirs, we came back to the mouth of the river, and there began our troubles; for the negroes, as soon as we were on shore, called on Mr. Oxenham to fulfil the bargain he had made with them. And now it came out (what few of us knew till then) that he had agreed with the Cimaroons that they should have all the prisoners which were taken, save the gold. And he, though loth, was about to give up the Spaniards to them, near forty in all, supposing that they intended to use them as slaves: but as we all stood talking, one of the Spaniards, understanding what was forward, threw himself on his knees before Mr. Oxenham, and shrieking like a madman, entreated not to be given up into the hands of 'those devils,' said he, 'who never take a Spanish prisoner, but they roast him alive, and then eat his heart among them.' We asked the negroes if this was possible? To which some answered, What was that to us? But others

said boldly, that it was true enough, and that revenge made the best sauce, and nothing was so sweet as Spanish blood; and one, pointing to the lady, said such foul and devilish things as I should be ashamed either for me to speak, or you to hear. At this we were like men amazed for very horror; and Mr. Oxenham said, 'You incarnate fiends, if you had taken these fellows for slaves, it had been fair enough; for you were once slaves to them, and I doubt not cruelly used enough: but as for this abomination,' says he, 'God do so to me, and more also, if I let one of them come into your murderous hands.' So there was a great quarrel; but Mr. Oxenham stoutly bade put the prisoners on board the ships again, and so let the prizes go, taking with him only the treasure, and the lady and the little maid. And so the lad went on to Panama, God's wrath having gone out against us.

"Well, sirs, the Cimaroons after that went away from us, swearing revenge (for which we cared little enough), and we rowed up the river to a place where three streams met, and then up the least of the three, some four days' journey, till it grew all shoal and swift; and there we hauled the pinnace upon the sands, and Mr. Oxenham asked the men whether they were willing to carry the gold and silver over the mountains to the North Sea. Some of them at first were loth to do it, and I and others advised that we should leave the plate behind, and take the gold only, for it would have cost us three or four journeys at the least. But Mr. Oxenham promised every man 100 pezos of silver over and above his wages, which made them content

enough, and we were all to start the morrow morning. But, sirs, that night, as God had ordained, came a mishap by some rash speeches of Mr. Oxenham's, which threw all abroad again; for when we had carried the treasure about half a league inland, and hidden it away in a house which we made of boughs, Mr. O. being always full of that his fair lady, spoke to me and William Penberthy of Marazion, my good comrade, and a few more, saying, 'That we had no need to return to England, seeing that we were already in the very garden of Eden, and wanted for nothing, but could live without labour or toil; and that it was better, when we got over to the North Sea, to go and seek out some fair island, and there dwell in joy and pleasure till our lives' end. And we two,' he said, 'will be king and queen, and you, whom I can trust, my officers; and for servants we will have the Indians, who, I warrant, will be more fain to serve honest and merry masters like us than those Spanish devils,' and much more of the like; which words I liked well,—my mind, alas! being given altogether to carnal pleasure and vanity,—as did William Penberthy, my good comrade, on whom I trust God has had mercy. But the rest, sirs, took the matter all across, and began murmuring against the Captain, saying that poor honest mariners like them had always the labour and the pain, while he took his delight with his lady; and that they would have at least one merry night before they were slain by the Cimaroons, or eaten by panthers and lagartos; and so got out of the pinnace two great skins of Canary wine, which were taken in

the Lima prize, and sat themselves down to drink. Moreover, there were in the pinnace a great sight of hens, which camé from the same prize, by which Mr. O. set great store, keeping them for the lady and the little maid; and falling upon these, the men began to blaspheme, saying, 'What a plague had the Captain to fill the boat with dirty live lumber for that giglet's sake? They had a better right to a good supper than ever she had, and might fast awhile to cool her hot blood;' and so cooked and ate those hens, plucking them on board the pinnace, and letting the feathers fall into the stream. But when William Penberthy, my good comrade, saw the feathers floating away down, he asked them if they were mad, to lay a trail by which the Spaniards would surely track them out, if they came after them, as without doubt they would. But they laughed him to scorn, and said that no Spanish cur dared follow on the heels of true English mastiffs as they were, and other boastful speeches; and at last, being heated with wine, began afresh to murmur at the Captain. And one speaking of his counsel about the island, the rest altogether took it amiss and out of the way; and some sprang up crying treason, and others that he meant to defraud them of the plate which he had promised, and others that he meant to desert them in a strange land, and so forth, till Mr. O., hearing the hubbub, came out to them from the house, when they reviled him foully, swearing that he meant to cheat them; and one Edward Stiles, a Wapping man, mad with drink, dared to say that he was a fool for not giving up the prisoners to the

negroes, and what was it to him if the lady roasted? the negroes should have her yet; and drawing his sword, ran upon the Captain; for which I was about to strike him through the body; but the Captain, not caring to waste steel on such a ribald, with his fist caught him such a buffet behind the ear, that he fell down stark dead, and all the rest stood amazed. Then Mr. Oxhenham called out, 'All honest men who know me, and can trust me, stand by your lawful Captain against these ruffians.' Whereon, sirs, I, and Penberthy my good comrade, and four Plymouth men, who had sailed with Mr. O. in Mr. Drake's ship, and knew his trusty and valiant conditions, came over to him, and swore before God to stand by him and the lady. Then said Mr. O. to the rest, 'Will you carry this treasure, knaves, or will you not? Give me an answer here.' And they refused, unless he would, before they started, give each man his share. So Mr. O. waxed very mad, and swore that he would never be served by men who did not trust him, and so went in again; and that night was spent in great disquiet, I and those five others keeping watch about the house of boughs till the rest fell asleep, in their drink. And next morning, when the wine was gone out of them, Mr. O. asked them whether they would go to the hills with him, and find those negroes, and persuade them after all to carry the treasure. To which they agreed after awhile, thinking that so they should save themselves labour; and went off with Mr. Oxenham, leaving us six who had stood by him to watch the lady and the treasure, after he had taken

an oath of us that we would deal justly and obediently by him and by her, which God knows, gentlemen, we did. So he parted with much weeping and wailing of the lady, and was gone seven days; and all that time we kept that lady faithfully and honestly, bringing her the best we could find, and serving her upon our bended knees, both for her admirable beauty, and for her excellent conditions, for she was certainly of some noble kin, and courteous, and without fear, as if she had been a very princess. But she kept always within the house, which the little maid (God bless her!) did not, but soon learned to play with us and we with her, so that we made great cheer of her, gentlemen, sailor fashion—for you know we must always have our minions aboard to pet and amuse us—maybe a monkey, or a little dog, or a singing bird, ay, or mice and spiders, if we have nothing better to play withal. And she was wonderful sharp, sirs, was the little maid, and picked up her English from us fast, calling us jolly mariners, which I doubt but she has forgotten by now, but I hope in God it be not so;" and therewith the good fellow began wiping his eyes.

"Well, sir, on the seventh day we six were down by the pinnace clearing her out, and the little maid with us gathering of flowers, and William Penberthy fishing on the bank, about a hundred yards below, when on a sudden he leaps up and runs toward us, crying, 'Here come our hens' feathers back again with a vengeance!' and so bade catch up the little maid, and run for the house, for the Spaniards were upon us.

"Which was too true; for before we could win the

house, there were full eighty shot at our heels, but could not overtake us; nevertheless, some of them stopping, fixed their calivers and let fly, killing one of the Plymouth men. The rest of us escaped to the house, and catching up the lady, fled forth, not knowing whither we went, while the Spaniards, finding the house and treasure, pursued us no farther.

"For all that day and the next we wandered in great misery, the lady weeping continually, and calling for Mr. Oxenham most piteously, and the little maid likewise, till with much ado we found the track of our comrades, and went up that as best we might: but at nightfall, by good hap, we met the whole crew coming back, and with them 200 negroes or more, with bows and arrows. At which sight was great joy and embracing, and it was a strange thing, sirs, to see the lady; for before that she was altogether desperate: and yet she was now a very lioness, as soon as she had got her love again; and prayed him earnestly not to care for that gold, but to go forward to the North Sea, vowing to him in my hearing that she cared no more for poverty than she had cared for her good name, and then—they being a little apart from the rest—pointed round to the green forest, and said in Spanish—which I suppose they knew not that I understood,—'See, all round us is Paradise. Were it not enough for you and me to stay here for ever, and let them take the gold or leave it as they will?'

"To which Mr Oxenham—'Those who lived in Paradise had not sinned as we have, and would never have grown old or sick, as we shall.'

"And she—'If we do that, there are poisons enough in these woods, by which we may die in each other's arms, as would to Heaven we had died seven years agone!'

"But he—'No, no, my life. It stands upon my honour both to fulfil my bond with these men, whom I have brought hither, and to take home to England at least something of my prize as a proof of my own valour.'

"Then she smiling—'Am I not prize enough, and proof enough?' But he would not be so tempted, and turning to us offered us the half of that treasure, if we would go back with him, and rescue it from the Spaniard. At which the lady wept and wailed much; but I took upon myself to comfort her, though I was but a simple mariner, telling her that it stood upon Mr. Oxenham's honour; and that in England nothing was esteemed so foul as cowardice, or breaking word and troth betwixt man and man; and that better was it for him to die seven times by the Spaniards, than to face at home the scorn of all who sailed the seas. So, after much ado, back they went again; I and Penberthy, and the three Plymouth men which escaped from the pinnace, keeping the lady as before.

"Well, sirs, we waited five days, having made houses of boughs as before, without hearing aught; and on the sixth we saw coming afar off Mr. Oxenham, and with him fifteeen or twenty men, who seemed very weary and wounded; and when we looked for the rest to be behind them, behold there were no more;

at which, sirs, as you may well think, our hearts sank within us.

"And Mr. O., coming nearer, cried out afar off, 'All is lost!' and so walked into the camp without a word, and sat himself down at the foot of a great tree with his head between his hands, speaking neither to the lady or to any one, till she very pitifully kneeling before him, cursing herself for the cause of all his mischief, and praying him to avenge himself upon that her tender body, won him hardly to look once upon her, after which (as is the way of vain and unstable man) all between them was as before.

"But the men were full of curses against the negroes, for their cowardice and treachery; yea, and against high Heaven itself, which had put the most part of their ammunition into the Spaniards' hands; and told me, and I believe truly, how they forced the enemy awaiting them in a little copse of great trees, well fortified with barricades of boughs, and having with them our two falcons, which they had taken out of the pinnace. And how Mr. Oxenham divided both the English and the negroes into two bands, that one might attack the enemy in front, and the other in the rear, and so set upon them with great fury, and would have utterly driven them out, but that the negroes, who had come on with much howling, like very wild beasts, being suddenly scared with the shot and noise of the ordnance, turned and fled, leaving the Englishmen alone; in which evil strait Mr. O. fought like a very Guy of Warwick, and I verily believe every man of them likewise; for there was none of them who had

not his shrewd scratch to show. And indeed, Mr. Oxenham's party had once gotten within the barricades but the Spaniards being sheltered by the tree trunks (and especially by one mighty tree, which stood as I remembered it, and remember it now, borne up two fathoms high upon its own roots, as it were upon arches and pillars), shot at them with such advantage, that they had several slain, and seven more taken alive, only among the roots of that tree. So seeing that they could prevail nothing, having little but their pikes and swords, they were fain to give back; though Mr. Oxenham swore he would not stir a foot, and making at the Spanish Captain was borne down with pikes, and hardly pulled away by some, who at last reminding him of his lady, persuaded him to come away with the rest. Whereon the other party fled also; but what had become of them they knew not, for they took another way. And so they miserably drew off, having lost in men eleven killed and seven taken alive, besides five of the rascal negroes who were killed before they had time to run; and there was an end of the matter.[1]

[1] In the documents from which I have drawn this veracious history, a note is appended to this point of Yeo's story, which seems to me to smack sufficiently of the old Elizabethan seaman, to be inserted at length.

"All so far, and most after, agreeth with Lopez Vaz his tale, taken from his pocket by my Lord Cumberland's mariners at the river Plate, in the year 1586. But note here his vainglory and falsehood, or else fear of the Spaniard.

"First, lest it should be seen how great an advantage the Spaniards had, he maketh no mention of the English calivers, nor those two pieces of ordnance which were in the pinnace.

"Second, he saith nothing of the flight of the Cimaroons:

"But the next day, gentlemen, in came some five-and-twenty more, being the wreck of the other party, and with them a few negroes; and these last proved

though it was evidently to be gathered from that which he himself saith, that of less than seventy English were slain eleven, and of the negroes but five. And while of the English seven were taken alive, yet of the negroes none. And why, but because the rascals ran?

"Thirdly, it is a thing incredible, and out of experience, that eleven English should be slain and seven taken, with loss only of two Spaniards killed.

"Search now, and see (for I will not speak of mine own small doings), in all those memorable voyages, which the worthy and learned Mr. Hakluyt hath so painfully collected, and which are to my old age next only to my Bible, whether in all the fights which we have endured with the Spaniards, their loss, even in victory, hath not far exceeded ours. For we are both bigger of body and fiercer of spirit, being even to the poorest of us (thanks to the care of our illustrious princes) the best fed men of Europe, the most trained to feats of strength and use of weapons, and put our trust also not in any Virgin or saints, dead rags and bones, painted idols which have no breath in their mouths, or St. Bartholomew medals and such devil's remembrancers: but in the only true God and our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom whosoever trusteth, one of them shall chase a thousand. So I hold, having had good experience; and say, if they have done it once, let them do it again, and kill their eleven to our two, with any weapon they will, save paper bullets blown out of Fame's lying trumpet. Yet I have no quarrel with the poor Portugal; for I doubt not but friend Lopez Vaz had looking over his shoulder as he wrote some mighty black velvet Don, with a name as long as that Don Bernaldino Delgadillo de Avellaneda who set forth lately his vainglorious libel of lies concerning the last and fatal voyage of my dear friends Sir F. Drake and Sir John Hawkins, who rest in peace, having finished their labours, as would God I rested. To whose shameless and unspeakable lying my good friend Mr. Henry Savile of this county did most pithily and wittily reply, stripping the ass

themselves no honester men than they were brave, for there being great misery among us English, and every one of us straggling where he could to get food, every day one or more who went out never came back, and that caused a suspicion that the negroes had betrayed them to the Spaniards, or may be, slain and eaten them. So these fellows being upbraided with that altogether left us, telling us boldly, that if they had eaten our fellows, we owed them a debt instead of the Spanish prisoners; and we, in great terror and hunger, went forward and over the mountains till we came to a little river which ran northward, which seemed to lead into the Northern Sea; and there Mr. O.—who, sirs, I will say, after his first rage was over, behaved himself all through like a valiant and skilful commander—bade us cut down trees and make canoes, to go down to the sea; which we began to do with great labour and little profit, hewing down trees with our swords, and burning them out with fire, which, after much labour, we kindled; but as we were a-burning out of the first tree, and cutting down of another, a great party of negroes came upon us, and with much friendly show bade us flee for our lives, for the Spaniards were upon us in great force. And so we were up and away again, hardly able to drag our legs after us for hunger

out of his lion's skin; and Sir Thomas Baskerville, general of the fleet, by my advice, send him a cartel of defiance, offering to meet him with choice of weapons, in any indifferent kingdom of equal distance from this realm; which challenge he hath prudently put in his pipe, or rather rolled it up for one of his Spanish cigarros, and smoked it, and I doubt not, found it foul in the mouth."

and weariness, and the broiling heat. And some were taken (God help them !) and some fled with the negroes, of whom what became God alone knoweth ; but eight or ten held on with the Captain, among whom was I, and fled downward toward the sea for one day ; but afterwards finding, by the noise in the woods, that the Spaniards were on the track of us, we turned up again toward the inland, and coming to a cliff, climbed up over it, drawing up the lady and the little maid with cords of liana (which hang from those trees as honeysuckle does here, but exceeding stout and long, even to fifty fathoms) ; and so breaking the track, hoped to be out of the way of the enemy.

"By which, nevertheless, we only increased our misery. For two fell from that cliff, as men asleep for very weariness, and miserably broke their bones ; and others, whether by the great toil, or sunstrokes, or eating of strange berries, fell sick of fluxes and fevers ; where was no drop of water, but rock of pumice stone as bare as the back of my hand, and full, moreover, of great cracks, black and without bottom, over which we had not strength to lift the sick, but were fain to leave them there aloft, in the sunshine, like Dives in his torments, crying aloud for a drop of water to cool their tongues ; and every man a great stinking vulture or two sitting by him, like an ugly black fiend out of the pit, waiting till the poor soul should depart out of the corpse : but nothing could avail, and for the dear life we must down again and into the woods, or be burned up alive upon those rocks.

"So getting down the slope on the farther side, we

came into the woods once more, and there wandered for many days, I know not how many ; our shoes being gone, and our clothes all rent off us with brakes and briars. And yet how the lady endured all was a marvel to see ; for she went barefoot many days, and for clothes was fain to wrap herself in Mr. Oxenham's cloak ; while the little maid went all but naked : but ever she looked still on Mr. Oxenham, and seemed to take no care as long as he was by, comforting and cheering us all with pleasant words ; yea, and once sitting down under a great fig-tree, sang us all to sleep with very sweet music ; yet, waking about midnight, I saw her sitting still upright, weeping very bitterly ; on whom, sirs, God have mercy ; for she was a fair and a brave jewel.

"And so, to make few words of a sad matter, at last there were none left but Mr. Oxenham and the lady and the little maid, together with me and William Penberthy of Marazion, my good comrade. And Mr. Oxenham always led the lady, and Penberthy and I carried the little maid. And for food we had fruits, such as we could find, and water we got from the leaves of certain lilies which grew on the bark of trees, which I found by seeing the monkeys drink at them ; and the little maid called them monkey-cups, and asked for them continually, making me climb for them. And so we wandered on, and upward into very high mountains, always fearing lest the Spaniards should track us with dogs, which made the lady leap up often in her sleep, crying that the bloodhounds were upon her. And it befell upon a day, that we

came into a great wood of ferns (which grew not on the ground like ours, but on stems as big as a pinnace's mast, and the bark of them was like a fine meshed net, very strange to see), where was very pleasant shade, cool and green; and there, gentlemen, we sat down on a bank of moss, like folk desperate and foredone, and every one looked the other in the face for a long while. After which I took off the bark of those ferns, for I must needs be doing something to drive away thought, and began to plait slippers for the little maid.

"And as I was plaiting, Mr. Oxenham said, 'What hinders us from dying like men, every man falling on his own sword?' To which I answered that I dare not; for a wise woman had prophesied of me, sirs, that I should die at sea, and yet neither by water or battle, wherefore I did not think right to meddle with the Lord's purposes. And William Penberthy said, 'That he would sell his life, and that dear, but never give it away.' But the lady said, 'Ah, how gladly would I die! but then la paouvre garse,' which is in French 'the poor maid,' meaning the little one. Then Mr. Oxenham fell into a very great weeping, a weakness I never saw him in before or since; and with many tears besought me never to desert that little maid, whatever might befall; which I promised, swearing to it like a heathen, but would, if I had been able, have kept it like a Christian. But on a sudden there was a great cry in the wood, and coming through the trees on all sides Spanish arquebusiers, a hundred strong at least, and negroes with them, who bade us

stand or they would shoot. William Penberthy leapt up, crying, 'Treason!' and running upon the nearest negro ran him through, and then another, and then falling on the Spaniards, fought manfully till he was borne down with pikes, and so died. But I, seeing nothing better to do, sate still and finished my plaiting. And so we were all taken, and I and Mr. Oxenham bound with cords; but the soldiers made a litter for the lady and child, by commandment of Señor Diego de Trees, their commander, a very courteous gentleman.

"Well, sirs, we were brought down to the place where the house of boughs had been by the river-side; there we went over in boats, and found waiting for us certain Spanish gentlemen, and among others one old and ill-favoured man, grey-bearded and bent, in a suit of black velvet, who seemed to be a great man among them. And if you will believe me, Mr. Leigh, that was none other than the old man with the gold falcon at his breast, Don Francisco Xararte by name, whom you found aboard of the Lima ship. And had you known as much of him as I do, or as Mr. Oxenham did either, you had cut him up for shark's bait, or ever you let the cur ashore again.

"Well, sirs, as soon as the lady came to shore, that old man ran upon her sword in hand, and would have slain her, but some there held him back. On which he turned to, and reviled with every foul and spiteful word which he could think of, so that some there bade him be silent for shame; and Mr. Oxenham said, 'It is worthy of you, Don Francisco, thus to trumpet

abroad your own disgrace. Did I not tell you years ago that you were a cur; and are you not proving my words for me?'

"He answered, 'English dog, would to Heaven I had never seen you!'

"And Mr. Oxenham, 'Spanish ape, would to Heaven that I had sent my dagger through your herring-ribs when you past me behind St. Ildegonde's church, eight years last Easter-eve.' At which the old man turned pale, and then began again to upbraid the lady, vowing that he would have her burnt alive, and other devilish words, to which she answered at last—

"'Would that you had burnt me alive on my wedding morning, and spared me eight years of misery!' And he—

"'Misery? Hear the witch, Señors! Oh, have I not pampered her, heaped with jewels, clothes, coaches, what not? The saints alone know what I have spent on her. What more would she have of me?'

"To which she answered only but this one word, 'Fool!' but in so terrible a voice, though low, that they who were about to laugh at the old pantaloon, were more minded to weep for her.

"'Fool!' she said again, after a while, 'I will waste no words upon you. I would have driven a dagger to your heart months ago, but that I was loth to set you free so soon from your gout and your rheumatism. Selfish and stupid, know when you bought my body from my parents, you did not buy my soul! Farewell, my love, my life! and farewell,

Señors! May you be more merciful to your daughters than my parents were to me!' And so, catching a dagger from the girdle of one of the soldiers, smote herself to the heart, and fell dead before them all.

"At which Mr. Oxenham smiled, and said, 'That was worthy of us both. If you will unbind my hands, Señors, I shall be most happy to copy so fair a schoolmistress.'

"But Don Diego shook his head, and said,

"'It were well for you, valiant Señor, were I at liberty to do so; but on questioning those of your sailors, whom I have already taken, I cannot hear that you have any letters of licence, either from the Queen of England, or any other potentate. I am compelled, therefore, to ask you, whether this is so; for it is a matter of life and death.'

"To which Mr. Oxenham answered merrily, 'That so it was: but that he was not aware that any potentate's licence was required to permit a gentleman's meeting his lady love; and that as for the gold which they had taken, if they had never allowed that fresh and fair young May to be forced into marrying that old January, he should never have meddled with their gold; so that was rather their fault than his.' And added, that if he was to be hanged, as he supposed, the only favour which he asked for was a long drop and no priests. And all the while, gentlemen, he still kept his eyes fixed on the lady's corpse, till he was led away with me, while all that stood by, God reward them for it, lamented openly the tragical end of those two sinful lovers.

"And now, sirs, what befell me after that matters little; for I never saw Captain Oxenham again, nor ever shall in this life."

"He was hanged, then?"

"So I heard for certain the next year, and with him the gunner and sundry more: but some were given away for slaves to the Spaniards, and may be alive now, unless, like me, they have fallen into the cruel clutches of the Inquisition. For the Inquisition now, gentlemen, claims the bodies and souls of all heretics all over the world (as the devils told me with their own lips, when I pleaded that I was no Spanish subject); and none that it catches, whether peaceable merchants, or shipwrecked mariners, but must turn or burn."

"But how did you get into the Inquisition?"

"Why, sir, after we were taken, we set forth to go down the river again; and the old Don took the little maid with him in one boat (and bitterly she screeched at parting from us, and from the poor dead corpse), and Mr. Oxenham with Don Diego de Trees in another, and I in a third. And from the Spaniards I learnt that we were to be taken down to Lima, to the Viceroy: but that the old man lived hard by Panama, and was going straight back to Panama forthwith with the little maid. But they said, 'It will be well for her if she ever gets there, for the old man swears she is none of his, and would have left her behind him in the woods, now, if Don Diego had not shamed him out of it.' And when I heard that, seeing that there was nothing but death before me, I

made up my mind to escape; and the very first night, sirs, by God's help, I did it, and went southward away into the forest, avoiding the tracks of the Cimaroons, till I came to an Indian town. And there, gentlemen, I got more mercy from heathens than ever I had from Christians; for when they found that I was no Spaniard, they fed me and gave me a house, and a wife (and a good wife she was to me), and painted me all over in patterns, as you see; and because I had some knowledge of surgery and blood-letting, and my fleams in my pocket, which were worth to me a fortune, I rose to great honour among them, though they taught me more of simples than ever I taught them of surgery. So I lived with them merrily enough, being a very heathen like them, or indeed worse, for they worshipped their Xemes, but I nothing. And in time my wife bare me a child; in looking at whose sweet face, gentlemen, I forgot Mr. Oxenham and his little maid, and my oath, ay, and my native land also. Wherefore it was taken from me, else had I lived and died as the beasts which perish; for one night, after we were all lain down, came a noise outside the town, and I starting up saw armed men and calivers shining in the moonlight, and heard one read in Spanish, with a loud voice, some fool's sermon, after their custom when they hunt the poor Indians, how God had given to St. Peter the dominion of the whole earth, and St. Peter again the Indies to the Catholic king; wherefore, if they would all be baptized and serve the Spaniard, they should have some monkey's allowance or other of more kicks

than pence; and if not, then have at them with fire and sword; but I dare say your worships know that devilish trick of theirs better than I."

"I know it, man. Go on."

"Well—no sooner were the words spoken, than, without waiting to hear what the poor innocents within would answer (though that mattered little, for they understood not one word of it), what do the villains but let fly right into the town with their calivers, and then rush in, sword in hand, killing pell-mell all they met, one of which shots, gentlemen, passing through the doorway, and close by me, struck my poor wife to the heart, that she never spoke word more. I, catching up the babe from her breast, tried to run: but when I saw the town full of them, and their dogs with them in leashes, which was yet worse, I knew all was lost, and sat down again by the corpse with the babe on my knees, waiting the end, like one stunned and in a dream; for now I thought God from whom I had fled had surely found me out, as he did Jonah, and the punishment of all my sins was come. Well, gentlemen, they dragged me out, and all the young men and women, and chained us together by the neck; and one, catching the pretty babe out of my arms, calls for water and a priest (for they had their shavelings with them), and no sooner was it christened, than, catching the babe by the heels, he dashed out its brains,—oh! gentlemen, gentlemen!—against the ground, as if it had been a kitten; and so did they to several more innocents that night, after they had christened them; saying it was best for

them to go to heaven while they were still sure thereof; and so marched us all for slaves, leaving the old folk and the wounded to die at leisure. But when morning came, and they knew by my skin that I was no Indian, and by my speech that I was no Spaniard, they began threatening me with torments, till I confessed that I was an Englishman, and one of Oxenham's crew. At that says the leader, 'Then you shall to Lima, to hang by the side of your Captain the pirate; by which I first knew that my poor Captain was certainly gone; but alas for me! the priest steps in and claims me for his booty, calling me Lutheran, heretic, and enemy of God; and so, to make short a sad story, to the Inquisition at Carthagena I went, where what I suffered, gentlemen, were as disgustful for you to hear, as unmanly for me to complain of; but so it was, that being twice racked, and having endured the water-torment as best I could, I was put to the scarpines, whereof I am, as you see, somewhat lame of one leg to this day. At which I could abide no more, and so, wretch that I am! denied my God, in hope to save my life; which indeed I did, but little it profited me; for though I had turned to their superstition, I must have two hundred stripes in the public place, and then go to the galleys for seven years. And there, gentlemen, ofttimes I thought that it had been better for me to have been burned at once and for all: but you know as well as I what a floating hell of heat and cold, hunger and thirst, stripes and toil, is every one of those accursed craft. In which hell, nevertheless, gentlemen, I found

the road to heaven,—I had almost said heaven itself. For it fell out, by God's mercy, that my next comrade was an Englishman like myself, a young man of Bristol, who, as he told me, had been some manner of factor on board poor Captain Barker's ship, and had been a preacher among the Anabaptists here in England. And, oh! Sir Richard Grenvile, if that man had done for you what he did for me, you would never say a word against those who serve the same Lord, because they don't altogether hold with you. For from time to time, sir, seeing me altogether despairing and furious, like a wild beast in a pit, he set before me in secret earnestly the sweet promises of God in Christ, —who says, 'Come to me, all ye that are heavy laden, and I will refresh you; and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow,'—till all that past sinful life of mine looked like a dream when one awaketh, and I forgot all my bodily miseries in the misery of my soul, so did I loathe and hate myself for my rebellion against that loving God who had chosen me before the foundation of the world, and come to seek and save me when I was lost; and falling into very despair at the burden of my heinous sins, knew no peace until I gained sweet assurance that my Lord had hanged my burden upon His cross, and washed my sinful soul in His most sinless blood, Amen!"

And Sir Richard Grenvile said Amen also.

"But, gentlemen, if that sweet youth won a soul to Christ, he paid as dearly for it as ever did saint of God. For after a three or four months, when I had been all that while in sweet converse with him, and I

may say in heaven in the midst of hell, there came one night to the barranco at Lima, where we were kept when on shore, three black devils of the Holy Office, and carried him off without a word, only saying to me, 'Look that your turn come not next, for we hear that you have had much talk with the villain.' And at these words I was so struck cold with terror that I swooned right away, and verily, if they had taken me there and then, I should have denied my God again, for my faith was but young and weak: but instead, they left me aboard the galley for a few months more (that was a whole voyage to Panama and back), in daily dread lest I should find myself in their cruel claws again—and then nothing for me, but to burn as a relapsed heretic. But when we came back to Lima, the officers came on board again, and said to me, 'That heretic has confessed nought against you, so we will leave you for this time: but because you have been seen talking with him so much, and the Holy Office suspects your conversion to be but a rotten one, you are adjudged to the galleys for the rest of your life in perpetual servitude.'"

"But what became of him?" asked Amyas.

"He was burned, sir, a day or two before we got to Lima, and five others with him at the same stake, of whom two were Englishmen; old comrades of mine, as I guess."

"Ah!" said Amyas, "we heard of that when we were off Lima; and they said too, that there were six more lying still in prison, to be burnt in a few days. If we had had our fleet with us (as we should have

had if it had not been for John Winter) we would have gone in and rescued them all, poor wretches, and sacked the town to boot: but what could we do with one ship?"

"Would to God you had, sir; for the story was true enough; and among them, I heard, were two young ladies of quality and their confessor, who came to their ends for reproving out of Scripture the filthy and loathsome living of those parts, which, as I saw well enough and too well, is liker to Sodom than to a Christian town; but God will avenge His saints, and their sins. Amen."

"Amen," said Sir Richard: "but on with thy tale, for it is as strange as ever man heard."

"Well, gentlemen, when I heard that I must end my days in that galley, I was for awhile like a madman: but in a day or two there came over me, I know not how, a full assurance of salvation, both for this life and the life to come, such as I had never had before; and it was revealed to me (I speak the truth gentlemen, before Heaven) that now I had been tried to the uttermost, and that my deliverance was at hand.

"And all the way up to Panama (that was after we had laden the 'Cacafuogo') I cast in my mind how to escape, and found no way: but just as I was beginning to lose heart again, a door was opened by the Lord's own hand; for (I know not why) we were marched across from Panama to Nombre, which had never happened before, and there put all together into a great barranco close by the quay-side, shackled

as is the fashion, to one long bar that ran the whole length of the house. And the very first night that we were there, I, looking out of the window, spied, lying close aboard of the quay, a good-sized caravel well armed and just loading for sea; and the land breeze blew off very strong, so that the sailors were laying out a fresh warp to hold her to the shore. And it came into my mind, that if we were aboard of her, we should be at sea in five minutes; and looking at the quay, I saw all the soldiers who had guarded us scattered about drinking and gambling, and some going into taverns to refresh themselves after their journey. That was just at sundown; and half an hour after, in comes the gaoler to take a last look at us for the night, and his keys at his girdle. Whereon, sirs (whether by madness, or whether by the spirit which gave Samson strength to rend the lion), I rose against him as he passed me, without forethought or treachery of any kind, chained though I was, caught him by the head, and threw him there and then against the wall, that he never spoke word after; and then with his keys freed myself and every soul in that room, and bid them follow me, vowing to kill any man who disobeyed my commands. They followed, as men astounded and leaping out of night into day, and death into life, and so aboard that caravel and out of the harbour (the Lord only knows how, who blinded the eyes of the idolaters), with no more hurt than a few chance-shot from the soldiers on the quay. But my tale has been over-long already, gentlemen——"

"Go on till midnight, my good fellow, if you will."

"Well, sirs, they chose me for Captain, and a certain Genoese for lieutenant, and away to go. I would fain have gone ashore after all, and back to Panama to hear news of the little maid: but that would have been but a fool's errand. Some wanted to turn pirates: but I, and the Genoese too, who was a prudent man, though an evil one, persuaded them to run for England and get employment in the Netherland wars, assuring them that there would be no safety in the Spanish main, when once our escape got wind. And the more part being of one mind, for England we sailed, watering at the Barbadoes because it was desolate; and so eastward toward the Canaries. In which voyage what we endured (being taken by long calms), by scurvy, calentures, hunger, and thirst, no tongue can tell. Many a time were we glad to lay out sheets at night to catch the dew, and suck them in the morning; and he that had a noggin of rain-water out of the scuppers was as much sought to as if he had been Adelantado of all the Indies; till of a hundred and forty poor wretches a hundred and ten were dead, blaspheming God and man, and above all, me and the Genoese for taking the Europe voyage, as if I had not sins enough of my own already. And last of all, when we thought ourselves safe, we were wrecked by south-westers on the coast of Brittany, near to Cape Race, from which but nine souls of us came ashore with their lives; and so to Brest, where I found a Flushinger who carried me to Falmouth; and so ends my tale, in which if I have said one word

more or less than truth, I can wish myself no worse, than to have it all to undergo a second time."

And his voice, as he finished, sank from very weariness of soul; while Sir Richard sat opposite him in silence, his elbows on the table, his cheeks on his doubled fists, looking him through and through with kindling eyes. No one spoke for several minutes; and then—

"Amyas, you have heard this story? You believe it?"

"Every word, sir, or I should not have the heart of a Christian man."

"So do I. Anthony!"

The butler entered.

"Take this man to the buttery; clothe him comfortably, and feed him with the best; and bid the knaves treat him as if he were their own father."

But Yeo lingered.

"If I might be so bold as to ask your worship a favour?——"

"Anything in reason, my brave fellow."

"If your worship could put me in the way of another adventure to the Indies?"

"Another! Hast not had enough of the Spaniards already?"

"Never enough, sir, while one of the idolatrous tyrants is left unhanged," said he, with a right bitter smile. "But it's not for that only, sir: but my little maid—Oh, sir! my little maid, that I swore to Mr. Oxenham to look to, and never saw her from that day to this! I must find her, sir, or I shall go mad,

I believe. Not a night but she comes and calls to me in my dreams, the poor darling; and not a morning but when I wake there is my oath lying on my soul, like a great black cloud, and I no nearer the keeping of it. I told that poor young minister of it when we were in the galleys together; and he said oaths were oaths, and keep it I must; and keep it I will, sir, if you'll but help me.

"Have patience, man. God will take as good care of thy little maid as ever thou wilt."

"I know it, sir. I know it: but faith's weak, sir! and oh! if she were bred up a Papist and an idolater; wouldn't her blood be on my head then, sir? Sooner than that, sooner than that, I'd be in the Inquisition again to-morrow, I would!"

"My good fellow, there are no adventures to the Indies forward now: but if you want to fight Spaniards, here is a gentleman will show you the way. Amyas, take him with you to Ireland. If he has learnt half the lessons God has set him to learn, he ought to stand you in good stead."

Yeo looked eagerly at the young giant.

"Will you have me, sir? There's few matters I can't turn my hand to: and maybe you'll be going to the Indies again, some day, eh? and take me with you? I'd serve your turn well, though I say it, either for gunner or for pilot. I know every stone and tree from Nombre to Panama, and all the ports of both the seas. You'll never be content, I'll warrant, till you've had another turn along the gold coasts, will you now?"

Amyas laughed, and nodded; and the bargain was concluded.

So out went Yeo to eat, and Amyas having received his despatches, got ready for his journey home.

"Go the short way over the moors, lad; and send back Cary's grey when you can. You must not lose an hour, but be ready to sail the moment the wind goes about."

So they started: but as Amyas was getting into the saddle, he saw that there was some stir among the servants, who seemed to keep carefully out of Yeo's way, whispering and nodding mysteriously; and just as his foot was in the stirrup, Anthony, the old butler, plucked him back.

"Dear father alive, Mr. Amyas, !" whispered he: "and you ben't going by the moor road all alone with that chap?"

"Why not, then? I'm too big for him to eat, I reckon."

"Oh, Mr. Amyas! he's not right, I tell you; not company for a Christian—to go forth with creatures as has flames of fire in their inwards; 'tis temptation of Providence, indeed, then, it is."

"Tale of a tub."

"Tale of a Christian, sir. There was two boys pig-minding, seed him at it down the hill, beside a maiden that was taken mazed (and no wonder, poor soul!) and lying in screeching asterisks now down to the mill—you ask as you go by—and saw the flames come out of the mouth of mun, and the smoke

out of mun's nose like a vire-drake, and the roaring of mun like the roaring of ten thousand bulls. Oh, sir! and to go with he after dark over moor! 'Tis the devil's devices, sir, against you, because you'm going against his sarvants the Pope of Room and the Spaniard; and you'll be Pixy-led, sure as life, and locked into a bog, you will, and see mun vanish away to fire and brimstone, like a jack-o'-lantern. Oh, have a care, then, have a care!"

And the old man wrung his hands, while Amyas, bursting with laughter, rode off down the park, with the unconscious Yeo at his stirrup, chatting away about the Indies, and delighting Amyas more and more by his shrewdness, high spirit, and rough eloquence.

They had gone ten miles or more; the day began to draw in, and the western wind to sweep more cold and cheerless every moment, when Amyas, knowing that there was not an inn hard by around for many a mile ahead, took a pull at a certain bottle which Lady Grenvile had put into his holster, and then offered Yeo a pull also.

He declined; he had meat and drink too about him, Heaven be praised!

"Meat and drink? fall to then, man, and don't stand on manners."

Whereon Yeo, seeing an old decayed willow by a brook, went to it, and took therefrom some touchwood, to which he set a light with his knife and a stone, while Amyas watched, a little puzzled and startled, as Yeo's fiery reputation came into his mind. Was he really a Salamander-Sprite, and going to warm his inside by

a meal of burning tinder? But now Yeo, in his solemn methodical way, pulled out of his bosom a brown leaf, and began rolling a piece of it up neatly to the size of his little finger; and then, putting the one end into his mouth and the other on the tinder, sucked at it till it was a-light; and drinking down the smoke, began puffing it out again at his nostrils with a grunt of deepest satisfaction, and resumed his dog-trot by Amyas's side, as if he had been a walking chimney.

On which Amyas burst into a loud laugh, and cried,

"Why, no wonder they said you breathed fire? Is not that the Indians' tobacco?"

"Yea, verily, Heaven be praised! but did you never see it before?"

"Never, though we heard talk of it along the coast; but we took it for one more Spanish lie. Humph—well, live and learn!"

"Ah, sir, no lie, but a blessed truth, as I can tell, who have ere now gone in the strength of this weed three days and nights without eating; and therefore, sir, the Indians always carry it with them on their war-parties: and no wonder; for when all things were made none was made better than this; to be a lone man's companion, a bachelor's friend, a hungry man's food, a sad man's cordial, a wakeful man's sleep, and a chilly man's fire, sir; while for stanching of wounds, purging of rheum, and settling of the stomach, there's no herb like unto it under the canopy of heaven."

The truth of which eulogium Amyas tested in after years, as shall be fully set forth in due place and time. But "Mark in the meanwhile," says one of the vera-

cious chroniclers from whom I draw these facts, writing seemingly in the palmy days of good Queen Anne, and "not having" (as he says) "before his eyes the fear of that misocapnic Solomon James I. or of any other lying Stuart," "that not to South Devon, but to North; not to Sir Walter Raleigh, but to Sir Amyas Leigh; not to the banks of Dart, but to the banks of Torridge, does Europe owe the day-spring of the latter age, that age of smoke which shall endure and thrive, when the age of brass shall have vanished like those of iron and of gold; for whereas Mr. Lane is said to have brought home that divine weed (as Spenser well names it) from Virginia in the year 1584, it is hereby indisputable that full four years earlier, by the bridge of Putford in the Torridge moors (which all true smokers shall hereafter visit as a hallowed spot and point of pilgrimage) first twinkled that fiery beacon and beneficent lodestar of Bidefordian commerce, to spread hereafter from port to port and peak to peak, like the watch-fires which proclaimed the coming of the Armada or the fall of Troy, even to the shores of the Bosphorus, the peaks of the Caucasus, and the farthest isles of the Malayan sea; while Bideford, metropolis of tobacco, saw her Pool choked with Virginian traders, and the pavement of her Bridgeland Street groaning beneath the savoury bales of roll Trinadado, leaf, and pudding; and her grave burghers, bolstered and blocked out of their own houses by the scarce less savoury stock-fish casks which filled cellar, parlour, and attic, were fain to sit outside the door, a silver pipe in every strong right

hand, and each left hand chinking cheerfully the doubloons deep lodged in the auriferous caverns of their trunkhose; while in those fairy-rings of fragrant mist, which circled round their contemplative brows, flitted most pleasant visions of Wiltshire farmers jogging into Sherborne fair, their heaviest shillings in their pockets, to buy (unless old Aubrey lies) the lotus-leaf of Torridge for its weight in silver, and draw from thence, after the example of the Caciques of Dariena, supplies of inspiration much needed, then as now, in those Gothamite regions. And yet did these improve, as Englishmen, upon the method of those heathen savages; for the latter (so Salvation Yeo reported as a truth, and Dampier's surgeon Mr. Wafer after him), when they will deliberate of war or policy, sit round in the hut of the chief; where being placed, enter to them a small boy with a cigarro of the bigness of a rolling-pin, and puffs the smoke thereof into the face of each warrior, from the eldest to the youngest; while they, putting their hand funnel-wise round their mouths, draw into the sinuosities of the brain that more than Delphic vapour of prophecy; which boy presently falls down in a swoon, and being dragged out by the heels and laid by to sober, enter another to puff at the sacred cigarro, till he is dragged out likewise; and so on till the tobacco is finished, and the seed of wisdom has sprouted in every soul into the tree of meditation, bearing the flowers of eloquence, and in due time the fruit of valiant action." With which quaint fact (for fact it is, in spite of the bombast) I end the present chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW THE NOBLE BROTHERHOOD OF THE ROSE WAS FOUNDED.

"It is virtue, yea virtue, gentlemen, that maketh gentlemen; that maketh the poor rich, the base-born noble, the subject a sovereign, the deformed beautiful, the sick whole, the weak strong, the most miserable most happy. There are two principal and peculiar gifts in the nature of man, knowledge and reason; the one commandeth, and the other obeyeth: these things neither the whirling wheel of fortune can change, neither the deceitful cavillings of worldlings separate, neither sickness abate, neither age abolish."—LILLY'S *Euphues*, 1586.

IT now falls to my lot to write of the foundation of that most chivalrous brotherhood of the Rose, which after a few years made itself not only famous in its native county of Devon, but formidable, as will be related hereafter, both in Ireland and in the Netherlands, in the Spanish Main and the heart of South America. And if this chapter shall seem to any Quixotic and fantastical, let them recollect that the generation who spoke and acted thus in matters of love and honour were, nevertheless, practised and valiant soldiers, and prudent and crafty politicians; that he who wrote the Arcadia was at the same time, in spite of his youth, one of the subtlest diplomatists of Europe; that the poet of the Faëry Queene was

also the author of The State of Ireland; and if they shall quote against me with a sneer Lilly's Euphues itself, I shall only answer by asking—Have they ever read it? For if they have done so, I pity them if they have not found it, in spite of occasional tediousness and pedantry, as brave, righteous, and pious a book as man need look into; and wish for no better proof of the nobleness and virtue of the Elizabethan age, than the fact that "Euphues" and the "Arcadia" were the two popular romances of the day. It may have suited the purposes of Sir Walter Scott, in his cleverly drawn Sir Piercie Shafton, to ridicule the Euphuists, and that *affectatam comitatem* of the travelled English of which Languet complains; but over and above the anachronism of the whole character (for, to give but one instance, the Euphuist knight talks of Sidney's quarrel with Lord Oxford at least ten years before it happened), we do deny that Lilly's book could, if read by any man of common sense, produce such a coxcomb, whose spiritual ancestors would rather have been Gabriel Harvey and Lord Oxford,—if indeed the former has not maligned the latter, and ill-tempered Tom Nash maligned the maligner in his turn.

But, indeed, there is a double anachronism in Sir Piercie; for he does not even belong to the days of Sidney, but to those worse times which began in the latter years of Elizabeth, and after breaking her mighty heart, had full licence to bear their crop of fools' heads in the profligate days of James. Of them, perhaps, hereafter. And in the meanwhile, let those

who have not read "Euphues," believe that, if they could train a son after the fashion of his Ephœbus, to the great saving of their own money and his virtue, all fathers, even in these money-making days, would rise up and call them blessed. Let us rather open our eyes, and see in these old Elizabeth gallants our own ancestors, showing forth with the luxuriant wildness of youth, all the virtues which still go to the making of a true Englishman. Let us not only see in their commercial and military daring, in their political astuteness, in their deep reverence for law, and in their solemn sense of the great calling of the English nation, the antitypes or rather the examples of our own: but let us confess that their chivalry is only another garb of that beautiful tenderness and mercy which is now, as it was then, the twin sister of English valour; and even in their extravagant fondness for Continental manners and literature, let us recognise that old Anglo-Norman teachableness and wide-heartedness, which has enabled us to profit by the wisdom and civilisation of all ages and of all lands, without prejudice to our own distinctive national character.

And so I go to my story, which, if any one dislikes, he has but to turn the leaf till he finds pasturage which suits him better.

Amyas could not sail the next day, or the day after; for the south-wester freshened, and blew three parts of a gale dead into the bay. So having got the Mary Grenvile down the river into Appledore pool, ready to start with the first shift of wind, he went

quietly home; and when his mother started on a pillion behind the old serving-man to ride to Clovelly, where Frank lay wounded, he went in with her as far as Bideford, and there met, coming down the High Street, a procession of horsemen headed by Will Cary, who, clad cap-à-pié in shining armour, sword on thigh, and helmet at saddle-bow, looked as gallant a young gentleman as ever Bideford dames peeped at from door and window. Behind him, upon country ponies, came four or five stout serving-men, carrying his lances and baggage, and their own long-bows, swords, and bucklers; and behind all, in a horse-litter, to Mrs. Leigh's great joy, Master Frank himself. He deposed that his wounds were only flesh-wounds, the dagger having turned against his ribs; that he must see the last of his brother; and that with her good leave he would not come home to Burrough, but take up his abode with Cary in the Ship Tavern, close to the Bridge-foot. This he did forthwith, and settling himself on a couch, held his levee there in state, mobbed by all the gossips of the town, not without white fibs as to who had brought him into that sorry plight.

But in the meanwhile, he and Amyas concocted a scheme, which was put into effect the next day (being market-day); first by the innkeeper, who began under Amyas's orders a bustle of roasting, boiling, and frying, unparalleled in the annals of the Ship Tavern; and next by Amyas himself, who, going out into the market, invited as many of his old schoolfellows, one by one apart, as Frank had pointed out to him, to a

merry supper and a "rowse" thereon consequent; by which crafty scheme, in came each of Rose Salterne's gentle admirers, and found himself, to his considerable disgust, seated at the same table with six rivals, to none of whom had he spoken for the last six months. However, all were too well bred to let the Leighs discern as much; and they (though, of course, they knew all) settled their guests, Frank on his couch lying at the head of the table, and Amyas taking the bottom: and contrived, by filling all mouths with good things, to save them the pain of speaking to each other till the wine should have loosened their tongues and warmed their hearts. In the meanwhile both Amyas and Frank, ignoring the silence of their guests with the most provoking good-humour, chatted, and joked, and told stories, and made themselves such good company, that Will Cary, who always found merriment infectious, melted into a jest, and then into another, and finding good humour far more pleasant than bad, tried to make Mr. Coffin laugh, and only made him bow, and to make Mr. Fortescue laugh, and only made him frown; and unabashed nevertheless, began playing his light artillery upon the waiters, till he drove them out of the room bursting with laughter.

So far so good. And when the cloth was drawn, and sack and sugar became the order of the day, and "Queen and Bible" had been duly drunk with all the honours, Frank tried a fresh move, and—

"I have a toast, gentlemen—here it is. 'The gentlemen of the Irish wars; and may Ireland never

be without a St. Leger to stand by a Fortescue, a Fortescue to stand by a St. Leger, and a Chichester to stand by both.'"

Which toast of course involved the drinking the healths of the three representatives of those families, and their returning thanks, and paying a compliment each to the other's house: and so the ice cracked a little further; and young Fortescue proposed the health of "Amyas Leigh, and all bold mariners;" to which Amyas replied by a few blunt kindly words, "that he wished to know no better fortune than to sail round the world again with the present company as fellow-adventurers, and so give the Spaniards another taste of the men of Devon."

And by this time, the wine going down sweetly, caused the lips of them that were asleep to speak; till the ice broke up altogether, and every man began talking like a rational Englishman to the man who sat next him.

"And now, gentlemen," said Frank, who saw that it was the fit moment for the grand assault which he had planned all along; "let me give you a health which none of you, I dare say, will refuse to drink with heart and soul as well as with lips;—the health of one whom beauty and virtue have so ennobled, that in their light the shadow of lowly birth is unseen;—the health of one whom I would proclaim as peerless in loveliness, were it not that every gentleman here has sisters, who might well challenge from her the girdle of Venus: and yet what else dare I say, while those same lovely ladies who, if they but use their

own mirrors, must needs be far better judges of beauty than I can be, have in my own hearing again and again assigned the palm to her? Surely, if the goddesses decide among themselves the question of the golden apple, Paris himself must vacate the judgment-seat. Gentlemen, your hearts, I doubt not, have already bid you, as my unworthy lips do now, to drink 'The Rose of Torridge.'"

If the Rose of Torridge herself had walked into the room, she could hardly have caused more blank astonishment than Frank's bold speech. Every guest turned red, and pale, and red again, and looked at the other, as much as to say, "What right has any one but I to drink her? Lift your glass, and I will dash it out of your hand:" but Frank, with sweet effrontery, drank, "The health of the Rose of Torridge, and a double health to that worthy gentleman, whosoever he may be, whom she is fated to honour with her love!"

"Well done, cunning Frank Leigh!" cried blunt Will Cary; "none of us dare quarrel with you now, however much we may sulk at each other. For there's none of us, I'll warrant, but thinks that she likes him the best of all; and so we are bound to believe that you have drunk our healths all round."

"And so I have: and what better thing can you do, gentlemen, than to drink each other's healths all round likewise: and so show yourselves true gentlemen, true Christians, ay, and true lovers? For what is love (let me speak freely to you, gentlemen and guests), what is love, but the very inspiration of that

Deity whose name is Love? Be sure that not without reason did the ancients feign Eros to be the eldest of the gods, by whom the jarring elements of chaos were attuned into harmony and order. How then shall lovers make him the father of strife? Shall Psyche wed with Cupid, to bring forth a cockatrice's egg? or the soul be filled with love, the likeness of the immortals, to burn with envy and jealousy, division and distrust? True, the rose has its thorn: but it leaves poison and stings to the nettle. Cupid has his arrow: but he hurls no scorpions. Venus is awful when despised, as the daughters of Prœtus found: but her handmaids are the Graces, not the Furies. Surely he who loves aright will not only find love lovely, but become himself lovely also. I speak not to reprehend you, gentlemen; for to you (as your piercing wits have already perceived, to judge by your honourable blushes) my discourse tends; but to point you, if you will but permit me, to that rock which I myself have, I know not by what Divine good hap, attained; if, indeed, I have attained it, and am not about to be washed off again by the next tide."

Frank's rapid and fantastic oratory, utterly unexpected as it was, had as yet left their wits no time to set their tempers on fire; but when, weak from his wounds, he paused for breath, there was a haughty murmur from more than one young gentleman, who took his speech as an impertinent interference with each man's right to make a fool of himself; and Mr. Coffin, who had sat quietly bolt upright, and looking at the opposite wall, now rose as quietly, and with a

face which tried to look utterly unconcerned, was walking out of the room: another minute, and Lady Bath's prophecy about the feast of the Lapithæ might have come true.

But Frank's heart and head never failed him.

"Mr. Coffin!" said he, in a tone which compelled that gentleman to turn round, and so brought him under the power of a face which none could have beheld for five minutes and borne malice, so imploring, tender, earnest was it. "My dear Mr. Coffin! If my earnestness has made me forget even for a moment the bounds of courtesy, let me entreat you to forgive me. Do not add to my heavy griefs, heavy enough already, the grief of losing a friend. Only hear me patiently to the end (generously, I know, you will hear me); and then, if you are still incensed, I can but again entreat your forgiveness a second time."

Mr. Coffin, to tell the truth, had at that time never been to Court; and he was, therefore, somewhat jealous of Frank, and his Court talk, and his Court clothes, and his Court company; and moreover, being the eldest of the guests, and only two years younger than Frank himself, he was a little nettled at being classed in the same category with some who were scarce eighteen. And if Frank had given the least hint which seemed to assume his own superiority, all had been lost: but when, instead thereof, he sued *in formâ pauperis*, and threw himself upon Coffin's mercy, the latter, who was a true-hearted man enough, and after all had known Frank ever since either of them could walk, had nothing to do but to sit down again

and submit, while Frank went on more earnestly than ever.

"Believe me; believe me, Mr. Coffin, and gentlemen all, I no more arrogate to myself a superiority over you, than does the sailor hurled on shore by the surge fancy himself better than his comrade who is still battling with the foam. For I too, gentlemen,—let me confess it, that by confiding in you I may, perhaps, win you to confide in me,—have loved, ay and do love, where you love also. Do not start. Is it a matter of wonder that the sun which has dazzled you has dazzled me; that the loadstone which has drawn you has drawn me? Do not frown, either, gentlemen. I have learnt to love you for loving what I love, and to admire you for admiring that which I admire. Will you not try the same lesson; so easy, and, when learnt, so blissful? What breeds more close communion between subjects, than allegiance to the same Queen? between brothers, than duty to the same father? between the devout, than adoration for the same Deity? And shall not worship for the same beauty be likewise a bond of love between the worshippers? and each lover see in his rival not an enemy, but a fellow-sufferer? You smile and say in your hearts, that though all may worship, but one can enjoy; and that one man's meat must be the poison of the rest. Be it so, though I deny it. Shall we anticipate our own doom, and slay ourselves for fear of dying? Shall we make ourselves unworthy of her from our very eagerness to win her, and show ourselves her faithful knights, by cherishing envy,—most

unknightly of all sins? Shall we dream with the Italian or the Spaniard that we can become more amiable in a lady's eyes, by becoming hateful in the eyes of God and of each other? Will she love us the better, if we come to her with hands stained in the blood of him whom she loves better than us? Let us recollect ourselves rather, gentlemen; and be sure that our only chance of winning her, if she be worth winning, is to will what she wills, honour whom she honours, love whom she loves. If there is to be rivalry among us, let it be a rivalry in nobleness, an emulation in virtue. Let each try to outstrip the other in loyalty to his Queen, in valour against her foes, in deeds of courtesy and mercy to the afflicted and oppressed; and thus our love will indeed prove its own divine origin, by raising us nearer to those gods whose gift it is. But yet I show you a more excellent way, and that is charity. Why should we not make this common love to her, whom I am unworthy to name, the sacrament of a common love to each other? Why should we not follow the heroical examples of those ancient knights, who having but one grief, one desire, one goddess, held that one heart was enough to contain that grief, to nourish that desire, to worship that divinity; and so uniting themselves in friendship till they became but one soul in two bodies, lived only for each other in living only for her, vowing, as faithful worshippers, to abide by her decision, to find their own bliss in hers, and whomsoever she esteemed most worthy of her love, to esteem most worthy also, and count themselves, by that her

choice, the bounden servants of him whom their mistress had condescended to advance to the dignity of her master?—as I (not without hope that I shall be outdone in generous strife) do here promise to be the faithful friend, and, to my ability, the hearty servant, of him who shall be honoured with the love of the Rose of Torridge."

He ceased, and there was a pause.

At last young Fortescue spoke.

"I may be paying you a left-handed compliment, sir: but it seems to me that you are so likely, in that case, to become your own faithful friend and hearty servant (even if you have not borne off the bell already while we have been asleep), that the bargain is hardly fair between such a gay Italianist and us country swains."

"You undervalue yourself and your country, my dear sir. But set your mind at rest. I know no more of that lady's mind than you do: nor shall I know. For the sake of my own peace, I have made a vow neither to see her, nor to hear, if possible, tidings of her, till three full years are past. Dixi?"

Mr. Coffin rose.

"Gentlemen, I may submit to be outdone by Mr. Leigh in eloquence, but not in generosity; if he leaves these parts for three years, I do so also."

"And go in charity with all mankind," said Cary. "Give us your hand, old fellow. If you are a Coffin, you were sawn out of no wishy-washy elm-board, but right heart-of-oak. I am going, too, as Amyas here can tell, to Ireland away, to cool my hot liver in a bog,

like a Jack-hare in March. Come, give us thy neif, and let us part in peace. I was minded to have fought thee this day——"

"I should have been most happy, sir," said Coffin.

—"But now I am all love and charity to mankind. Can I have the pleasure of begging pardon of the world in general, and thee in particular? Does any one wish to pull my nose; send me an errand; make me lend him five pounds; ay, make me buy a horse of him, which will be as good as giving him ten? Come along! Join hands all round, and swear eternal friendship, as brothers of the sacred order of the— of what? Frank Leigh? Open thy mouth, Daniel, and christen us!"

"The Rose!" said Frank, quietly, seeing that his new love-philtre was working well, and determined to strike while the iron was hot, and carry the matter too far to carry it back again.

"The Rose!" cried Cary, catching hold of Coffin's hand with his right, and Fortescue's with his left. "Come, Mr. Coffin! Bend, sturdy oak? 'Woe to the stiffnecked and stout-hearted!' says Scripture."

And somehow or other, whether it was Frank's chivalrous speech, or Cary's fun, or Amyas's good wine, or the nobleness which lies in every young lad's heart, if their elders will take the trouble to call it out, the whole party came in to terms one by one, shook hands all round, and vowed on the hilt of Amyas's sword, to make fools of themselves no more, at least by jealousy: but to stand by each other and by their lady-love, and neither grudge nor grumble,

let her dance with, flirt with, or marry with, whom she would; and in order that the honour of their peerless dame, and the brotherhood which was named after her, might be spread through all lands, and equal that of Angelica or Isonde of Brittany, they would each go home, and ask their fathers' leave (easy enough to obtain in those brave times) to go abroad wheresoever there were "good wars," to emulate there the courage and the courtesy of Walter Manny and Gonzalo Fernandes, Bayard and Gaston de Foix. Why not? Sidney was the hero of Europe at five-and-twenty; and why not they?

And Frank watched and listened with one of his quiet smiles (his eyes, as some folks do, smiled even when his lips were still) and only said: "Gentlemen, be sure that you will never repent this day."

"Repent?" said Cary. "I feel already as angelical as thou lookest, Saint Silvertongue. What was it that sneezed?—the cat?"

"The lion, rather, by the roar of it," said Amyas, making a dash at the arras behind him. "Why, here is a doorway here! and——"

And rushing under the arras, through an open door behind, he returned, dragging out by the head Mr. John Brimblecombe.

Who was Mr. John Brimblecombe?

If you have forgotten him, you have done pretty nearly what every one else in the room had done. But you recollect a certain fat lad, son of the schoolmaster, whom Sir Richard punished for talebearing three years before, by sending him, not to Coventry,

but to Oxford. That was the man. He was now one-and-twenty, and a bachelor of Oxford, where he had learnt such things as were taught in those days, with more or less success; and he was now hanging about Bideford once more, intending to return after Christmas and read divinity, that he might become a parson, and a shepherd of souls in his native land.

Jack was in person exceedingly like a pig: but not like every pig: not in the least like the Devon pigs of those days, which, I am sorry to say, were no more shapely than the true Irish greyhound who pays Pat's "rint" for him; or than the lanky monsters who wallow in German rivulets, while the village swineherd, beneath a shady lime, forgets his fleas in the melody of a Jew's-harp — strange mud-coloured creatures, four feet high and four inches thick, which look as if they had passed their lives, as a collar of Oxford brawn is said to do, between two tight boards. Such were then the pigs of Devon: not to be compared with the true wild descendant of Noah's stock, high-withered, furry, grizzled, game-flavoured little rooklers, whereof many a sownder still grunted about Swinley down and Braunton woods, Clovelly glens and Bursdon moor. Not like these, nor like the tame abomination of those barbarous times, was Jack: but prophetic in face, figure, and complexion, of Fisher Hobbs and the triumphs of science. A Fisher Hobbs' pig of twelve stone, on his hind-legs— that was what he was, and nothing else; and if you do not know, reader, what a Fisher Hobbs is, you know nothing about pigs, and deserve no bacon for

breakfast. But such was Jack. The same plump mulberry complexion, garnished with a few scattered black bristles; the same sleek skin, looking always as if it was upon the point of bursting; the same little toddling legs; the same dapper bend in the small of the back; the same cracked squeak; the same low upright forehead, and tiny eyes; the same round self-satisfied jowl; the same charming sensitive little cocked nose, always on the look-out for a savoury smell,—and yet while watching for the best, contented with the worst; a pig of self-helpful and serene spirit, as Jack was, and therefore, like him, fatting fast while other pigs' ribs are staring through their skins.

Such was Jack; and lucky it was for him that such he was; for it was little that he got to fat him at Oxford, in days when a servitor meant really a servant-student; and wistfully that day did his eyes, led by his nose, survey at the end of the Ship Inn passage the preparations for Amyas's supper. The innkeeper was a friend of his; for, in the first place, they had lived within three doors of each other all their lives; and next, Jack was quite pleasant company enough, beside being a learned man and an Oxford scholar, to be asked in now and then to the innkeeper's private parlour, when there were no gentlemen there, to crack his little joke and tell his little story, sip the leavings of the guests' sack, and sometimes help the host to eat the leavings of their supper. And it was, perhaps, with some such hope that Jack trotted off round the corner to the Ship that very afternoon; for that faithful little nose of his, as it sniffed out of a back window

of the school, had given him warning of Sabean gales, and scents of Paradise, from the inn kitchen below; so he went round, and asked for his pot of small ale (his only luxury), and stood at the bar to drink it; and looked inward with his little twinkling right eye and sniffed inward with his little curling right nostril, and beheld, in the kitchen beyond, salad in stacks and faggots; salad of lettuce, salad of cress and endive, salad of boiled coleworts, salad of pickled coleworts, salad of angelica, salad of scurvy-wort, and seven salads more; for potatoes were not as yet, and salads were during eight months of the year the only vegetable. And on the dresser, and before the fire, whole hecatombs of fragrant victims, which needed neither frankincense nor myrrh; Clovelly herrings and Torridge salmon, Exmoor mutton and Stow venison, stubble geese and woodcocks, curlew and snipe, hams of Hampshire, chitterlings of Taunton, and botargos of Cadiz, such as Pantagrue himself might have devoured. And Jack eyed them, as a ragged boy eyes the cakes in a pastrycook's window; and thought of the scraps from the commoner's dinner, which were his wages for cleaning out the hall; and meditated deeply on the unequal distribution of human bliss.

"Ah, Mr. Brimblecombe!" said the host, bustling out with knife and apron to cool himself in the passage. "Here are doings! Nine gentlemen to supper!"

"Nine! Are they going to eat all that?"

"Well, I can't say—that Mr. Amyas is as good as three to his trencher: but still there's crumbs, Mr. Brimblecombe, crumbs; and Waste not want not is

my doctrine; so you and I may have a somewhat to stay our stomachs, about an eight o'clock."

"Eight?" said Jack, looking wistfully at the clock. "It's but four now. Well, it's kind of you, and perhaps I'll look in."

"Just you step in now, and look to this venison. There's a breast! you may lay your two fingers into the say there, and not get to the bottom of the fat. That's Sir Richard's sending. He's all for them Leighs, and no wonder, they'm brave lads, surely; and there's a saddle-o'-mutton! I rode twenty miles for mun yesterday, I did, over beyond Barnstaple; and five year old, Mr. John, it is, if ever five years was; and not a tooth to mun's head, for I looked to that; and smelt all the way home like any apple; and if it don't ate so soft as ever was scald cream, never you call me Thomas Burman."

"Humph!" said Jack. "And that's their dinner. Well, some are born with a silver spoon in their mouth."

"Some be born with roast beef in their mouths, and plum-pudding in their pocket to take away the taste o' mun; and that's better than empty spunes, eh?"

"For them that get it," said Jack. "But for them that don't——" And with a sigh he returned to his small ale, and then lingered in and out of the inn, watching the dinner as it went into the best room, where the guests were assembled.

And as he lounged there, Amyas went in, and saw him, and held out his hand, and said,—

"Hillo, Jack! how goes the world? How you've

grown!" and passed on;—what had Jack Brimblecombe to do with Rose Salterne?

So Jack lingered on, hovering around the fragrant smell like a fly round a honey-pot, till he found himself invisibly attracted, and as it were led by the nose out of the passage into the adjoining room, and to that side of the room where there was a door; and once there he could not help hearing what passed inside; till Rose Salterne's name fell on his ear. So, as it was ordained, he was taken in the fact. And now behold him brought in red-hand to judgment, not without a kick or two from the wrathful foot of Amyas Leigh. Whereat there fell on him a storm of abuse, which, for the honour of that gallant company, I shall not give in detail; but which abuse, strange to say, seemed to have no affect on the impenitent and unabashed Jack, who, as soon as he could get his breath, made answer fiercely, amid much puffing and blowing.

"What business have I here? As much as any of you. If you had asked me in, I would have come: but as you didn't, I came without asking."

"You shameless rascal!" said Cary. "Come if you were asked, where there was good wine? I'll warrant you for that!"

"Why," said Amyas, "no lad ever had a cake at school, but he would dog him up one street and down another all day for the crumbs, the trencher-scraping spaniel!"

"Patience, masters!" said Frank. "That Jack's is somewhat of a gnathonic and parasitic soul, or

stomach, all Bideford apple-women know: but I suspect more than Deus Venter has brought him hither."

"Deus eaves-dropping, then. We shall have the whole story over the town by to-morrow," said another; beginning at that thought to feel somewhat ashamed of his late enthusiasm.

"Ah, Mr. Frank! You were always the only one that would stand up for me! Deus Venter, quotha? 'Twas Deus Cupid, it was!"

A roar of laughter followed this announcement.

"What?" asked Frank; "was it Cupid, then, who sneezed approval to our love, Jack, as he did to that of Dido and Æneas?"

But Jack went on desperately.

"I was in the next room, drinking of my beer. I couldn't help that, could I? And then I heard her name; and I couldn't help listening then. Flesh and blood couldn't."

"Nor fat either!"

"No, nor fat, Mr. Cary. Do you suppose fat men haven't souls to be saved, as well as thin ones, and hearts to burst, too, as well as stomachs? Fat! Fat can feel, I reckon, as well as lean. Do you suppose there's nought inside here but beer?"

And he laid his hand, as Drayton might have said, on that stout bastion, hornwork, ravelin, or demilune, which formed the outworks to the citadel of his purple isle of man.

"Nought but beer?—Cheese, I suppose?"

"Bread?"

"Beef?"

"Love!" cried Jack. "Yes, Love!—Ay, you laugh; but my eyes are not so grown up with fat but what I can see what's fair as well as you."

"Oh, Jack, naughty Jack, dost thou heap sin on sin, and luxury on gluttony?"

"Sin? If I sin, you sin: I tell you, and I don't care who knows it, I've loved her these three years as well as e'er a one of you, I have. I've thought o' nothing else, prayed for nothing else, God forgive me! And then you laugh at me, because I'm a poor parson's son, and you fine gentlemen: God made us both, I reckon. You?—you make a deal of giving her up to-day. Why, it's what I've done for three miserable years as ever poor sinner spent; ay, from the first day I said to myself, 'Jack, if you can't have that pearl, you'll have none; and that you can't have, for it's meat for your masters; so conquer or die.' And I couldn't conquer. I can't help loving her, worshipping her, no more than you; and I will die: but you needn't laugh meanwhile at me that have done as much as you, and will do again."

"It is the old tale," said Frank to himself; "whom will not love transform into a hero?"

And so it was. Jack's squeaking voice was firm and manly, his pig's eyes flashed very fire, his gestures were so free and earnest, that the ungainliness of his figure was forgotten; and when he finished with a violent burst of tears, Frank, forgetting his wounds, sprang up and caught him by the hand.

"John Brimblecombe, forgive me! Gentlemen, if we are gentlemen, we ought to ask his pardon. Has

he not shown already more chivalry, more self-denial, and therefore more true love, than any of us? My friends, let the fierceness of affection, which we have used as an excuse for many a sin of our own, excuse his listening to a conversation in which he well deserved to bear a part."

"Ah," said Jack, "you make me one of your brotherhood; and see if I do not dare to suffer as much as any of you! You laugh? Do you fancy none can use a sword unless he has a baker's dozen of quarterings in his arms, or that Oxford scholars know only how to handle a pen?"

"Let us try his metal," said St. Leger. "Here's my sword, Jack; draw, Coffin! and have at him."

"Nonsense!" said Coffin, looking somewhat disgusted at the notion of fighting a man of Jack's rank; but Jack caught at the weapon offered to him.

"Give me a buckler, and have at any of you!"

"Here's a chair bottom," cried Cary; and Jack, seizing it in his left, flourished his sword so fiercely, and called so loudly to Coffin to come on, that all present found it necessary, unless they wished blood to be spilt, to turn the matter off with a laugh: but Jack would not hear of it.

"Nay: if you will let me be of your brotherhood, well and good: but if not, one or other I will fight: and that's flat."

"You see, gentlemen," said Amyas, "we must admit him, or die the death; so we needs must go when Sir Urian drives. Come up, Jack, and take the oaths. You admit him, gentlemen?"

"Let me but be your chaplain," said Jack, "and pray for your luck when you're at the wars. If I do stay at home in a country curacy, 'tis not much that you need be jealous of me with her, I reckon," said Jack, with a pathetical glance at his own stomach.

"Sia!" said Cary: "but if he be admitted, it must be done according to the solemn forms and ceremonies in such cases provided. Take him into the next room, Amyas, and prepare him for his initiation."

"What's that?" asked Amyas, puzzled by the word. But judging from the corner of Will's eye that initiation was Latin for a practical joke, he led forth his victim behind the arras again, and waited five minutes while the room was being darkened, till Frank's voice called to him to bring in the neophyte.

"John Brimblecombe," said Frank, in a sepulchral tone, "you cannot be ignorant, as a scholar and bachelor of Oxford, of that dread Sacrament by which Cataline bound the soul of his fellow-conspirators, in order that both by the daring of the deed he might have proof of their sincerity, and by the horror thereof astringe their souls by adamantine fetters, and Novem-Stygian oaths, to that wherefrom hereafter the weakness of the flesh might shrink. Wherefore, O Jack! we too have determined, following that ancient and classical example, to fill, as he did, a bowl with the life-blood of our most heroic selves, and to pledge each other therein, with vows whereat the stars shall tremble in their spheres, and Luna, blushing, veil her silver cheeks. Your blood alone is wanted to fill up

the goblet. Sit down, John Brimblecombe, and bare your arm!"

"But, Mr. Frank!——" said Jack; who was as superstitious as any old wife, and, what with the darkness and the discourse, already in a cold perspiration.

"But me no buts! or depart as recreant, not by the door like a man, but up the chimney like a flittermouse."

"But, Mr. Frank!"

"Thy vital juice, or the chimney! Choose!" roared Cary in his ear.

"Well, if I must," said Jack; "but it's desperate hard that because you can't keep faith without these barbarous oaths, I must take them too, that have kept faith these three years without any."

At this pathetic appeal, Frank nearly melted: but Amyas and Cary had thrust the victim into a chair and all was prepared for the sacrifice.

"Bind his eyes, according to the classic fashion," said Will.

"Oh no, dear Mr. Cary; I'll shut them tight enough, I warrant: but not with your dagger, dear Mr. William—sure, not with your dagger? I can't afford to lose blood, though I do look lusty—I can't indeed; sure, a pin would do—I've got one here, to my sleeve, somewhere—Oh!"

"See the fount of generous juice! Flow on, fair stream. How he bleeds!—pints, quarts! Ah, this proves him to be in earnest!"

"A true lover's blood is always at his fingers' ends."

"He does not grudge it; of course not. Eh, Jack? What matters an odd gallon for her sake?"

"For her sake? Nothing, nothing? Take my life, if you will: but—Oh, gentlemen, a surgeon, if you love me! I'm going off—I'm fainting!"

"Drink, then, quick; drink and swear! Pat his back, Cary. Courage, man! it will be over in a minute. Now, Frank!——"

And Frank spoke—

"If plighted troth I fail, or secret speech reveal,
May Cocytean ghosts around my pillow squeal;
While Ate's brazen claws distringe my spleen in sunder,
And drag me deep to Pluto's keep, 'mid brimstone, smoke,
and thunder!"

"Placetne, domine?"

"Placet!" squeaked Jack, who thought himself at the last gasp, and gulped down full three-quarters of the goblet which Cary held to his lips.

"Ugh—Ah—Puh! Mercy on us! It tastes mighty like wine!"

"A proof, my virtuous brother," said Frank, "first, of thy abstemiousness, which has thus forgotten what wine tastes like; and next, of thy pure and heroical affection, by which thy carnal senses being exalted to a higher and supra-lunar sphere, like those Platonical dæmonizomenoi and enthusiazomenoi (of whom Jamblichus says that they were insensible to wounds and flame, and much more, therefore, to evil savours), doth make even the most nauseous draught redolent of that celestial fragrance, which proceeding, O Jack! from thine own inward virtue, assimilates by sympathy even outward accidents unto its own harmony and melody; for fragrance is, as has been said well, the song of

flowers, and sweetness, the music of apples—Ahem! Go in peace, thou hast conquered!"

"Put him out of the door, Will," said Amyas, "or he will swoon on our hands."

"Give him some sack," said Frank.

"Not a blessed drop of yours, sir," said Jack. "I like good wine as well as any man on earth, and see as little of it; but not a drop of yours, sirs, after your frumps and flouts about hanging-on and trencher-scraping. When I first began to love her, I bid good-bye to all dirty tricks; for I had some one then for whom to keep myself clean."

And so Jack was sent home, with a pint of good red Alicant wine in him (more, poor fellow, than he had tasted at once in his life before); while the rest, in high glee with themselves and the rest of the world, relighted the candles, had a right merry evening, and parted like good friends and sensible gentlemen of Devon, thinking (all except Frank) Jack Brimblecombe and his vow the merriest jest they had heard for many a day. After which they all departed: Amyas and Cary to Winter's squadron; Frank (as soon as he could travel) to the Court again; and with him young Basset, whose father Sir Arthur, being in London, procured for him a page's place in Leicester's household. Fortescue and Chichester went to their brothers in Dublin; St. Leger to his uncle the Marshal of Munster; Coffin joined Champernoun and Norris in the Netherlands; and so the Brotherhood of the Rose was scattered far and wide, and Mistress Salterne was left alone with her looking-glass.

CHAPTER IX.

HOW AMYAS KEPT HIS CHRISTMAS DAY.

"Take aim, you noble musqueteers,
And shoot you round about;
Stand to it, valiant pikemen,
And we shall keep them out.
There's not a man of all of us
A foot will backward flee;
I'll be the foremost man in fight,
Says brave Lord Willoughby!"

Elizabethan Ballad.

It was the blessed Christmas afternoon. The light was fading down; the even-song was done; and the good folks of Bideford were trooping home in merry groups, the father with his children, the lover with his sweetheart, to cakes and ale, and flapdragons and mummer's plays, and all the happy sports of Christmas night. One lady only, wrapped close in her black muffler and followed by her maid, walked swiftly, yet sadly, toward the long causeway and bridge which led to Northam town. Sir Richard Grenvile and his wife caught her up and stopped her courteously.

"You will come home with us, Mrs. Leigh," said Lady Grenvile, "and spend a pleasant Christmas night?"

Mrs. Leigh smiled sweetly, and laying one hand on

Lady Grenvile's arm, pointed with the other to the westward, and said—

"I cannot well spend a merry Christmas night, while that sound is in my ears."

The whole party around looked in the direction in which she pointed. Above their heads the soft blue sky was fading into grey, and here and there a misty star peeped out: but to the westward, where the downs and woods of Raleigh closed in with those of Abbotsham, the blue was webbed and turfed with delicate white flakes; iridescent spots, marking the path by which the sun had sunk, showed all the colours of the dying dolphin; and low on the horizon lay a long band of grassy green. But what was the sound which troubled Mrs. Leigh? None of them, with their merry hearts, and ears dulled with the din and bustle of the town, had heard it till that moment: and yet now—listen! It was dead calm. There was not a breath to stir a blade of grass. And yet the air was full of sound, a low deep roar which hovered over down and wood, salt-marsh and river, like the roll of a thousand wheels, the tramp of endless armies, or—what it was—the thunder of a mighty surge upon the boulders of the pebble ridge.

"The ridge is noisy to-night," said Sir Richard. "There has been wind somewhere."

"There is wind now, where my boy is, God help him!" said Mrs. Leigh: and all knew that she spoke truly. The spirit of the Atlantic storm had sent forward the token of his coming, in the smooth ground-swell which was heard inland, two miles away.

To-morrow the pebbles, which were now rattling down with each retreating wave, might be leaping to the ridge top, and hurled like round-shot far ashore upon the marsh by the force of the advancing wave, fleeing before the wrath of the western hurricane.

"God help my boy!" said Mrs. Leigh again.

"God is as near him by sea as by land," said good Sir Richard.

"True: but I am a lone mother; and one that has no heart just now but to go home and pray."

And so Mrs. Leigh went onward up the lane, and spent all that night in listening between her prayers to the thunder of the surge, till it was drowned, long ere the sun rose, in the thunder of the storm.

And where is Amyas on this same Christmas afternoon?

Amyas is sitting bare-headed in a boat's stern in Smerwick bay, with the spray whistling through his curls, as he shouts cheerfully,—

"Pull, and with a will, my merry men all, and never mind shipping a sea. Cannon balls are a cargo that don't spoil by taking salt-water."

His mother's presage has been true enough. Christmas-eve has been the last of the still, dark, steaming nights of the early winter; and the western gale has been roaring for the last twelve hours upon the Irish coast.

The short light of the winter day is fading fast. Behind him is a leaping line of billows lashed into mist by the tempest. Beside him green foam-fringed

columns are rushing up the black rocks, and falling again in a thousand cataracts of snow. Before him is the deep and sheltered bay: but it is not far up the bay that he and his can see; for some four miles out at sea begins a sloping roof of thick grey cloud, which stretches over their heads, and up and far away inland, cutting the cliffs off at mid-height, hiding all the Kerry mountains, and darkening the hollows of the distant firths into the blackness of night. And underneath that awful roof of whirling mist the storm is howling inland ever, sweeping before it the great foam-sponges, and the grey salt spray, till all the land is hazy, dim, and dun. Let it howl on! for there is more mist than ever salt spray made, flying before that gale; more thunder than ever sea-surge wakened echoing among the cliffs of Smerwick bay; along those sand-hills flash in the evening gloom red sparks which never came from heaven; for that fort, now christened by the invaders the Fort Del Oro, where flaunts the hated golden flag of Spain, holds San Josepho and eight hundred of the foe; and but three nights ago, Amyas and Yeo, and the rest of Winter's shrewdest hands, slung four culverins out of the Admiral's main deck, and floated them ashore, and dragged them up to the battery among the sand-hills; and now it shall be seen whether Spanish and Italian condottieri can hold their own on British ground against the men of Devon.

Small blame to Amyas if he was thinking, not of his lonely mother at Burrough Court, but of those quick bright flashes on sand-hill and on fort, where

Salvation Yeo was hurling the eighteen-pound shot with deadly aim, and watching with a cool and bitter smile of triumph, the flying of the sand, and the crashing of the gabions. Amyas and his party had been on board, at the risk of their lives, for a fresh supply of shot; for Winter's battery was out of ball, and had been firing stones for the last four hours, in default of better missiles. They ran the boat on shore through the surf, where a cove in the shore made landing possible, and almost careless whether she stove or not, scrambled over the sand-hills with each man his brace of shot slung across his shoulder: and Amyas, leaping into the trenches, shouted cheerfully to Salvation Yeo,

"More food for the bull-dogs, Gunner, and plums for the Spaniards' Christmas pudding!"

"Don't speak to a man at his business, Master Amyas. Five mortal times have I missed; but I will have that accursed Popish rag down, as I'm a sinner."

"Down with it then; nobody wants you to shoot crooked. Take good iron to it, and not footy paving-stones."

"I believe, sir, that the foul fiend is there, a turning of my shot aside, I do. I thought I saw him once: but, thank heaven, here's ball again. Ah, sir, if one could but cast a silver one! Now, stand by, men!"

And once again Yeo's eighteen-pounder roared, and away. And, oh glory! the great yellow flag of Spain, which streamed in the gale, lifted clean into the air,

flagstaff and all, and then pitched wildly down headforemost, far to leeward.

A hurrah from the sailors, answered by the soldiers of the opposite camp, shook the very cloud above them: but ere its echoes had died away, a tall officer leapt upon the parapet of the fort, with the fallen flag in his hand, and rearing it as well as he could upon his lance point, held it firmly against the gale, while the fallen flagstaff was raised again within.

In a moment a dozen long bows were bent at the daring foeman: but Amyas behind shouted,—

"Shame, lads! Stop, and let the gallant gentleman have due courtesy!"

So they stopped, while Amyas, springing on the rampart of the battery, took off his hat, and bowed to the flag-holder, who, as soon as relieved of his charge, returned the bow courteously, and descended.

It was by this time all but dark, and the firing began to slacken on all sides; Salvation and his brother gunners, having covered up their slaughtering tackle with tarpaulings, retired for the night, leaving Amyas, who had volunteered to take the watch till midnight; and the rest of the force having got their scanty supper of biscuit (for provisions were running very short) lay down under arms among the sand-hills, and grumbled themselves to sleep.

He had paced up and down in the gusty darkness for some hour or more, exchanging a passing word now and then with the sentinel, when two men entered the battery, chatting busily together. One was in complete armour; the other wrapt in the plain short cloak

of a man of pens and peace: but the talk of both was neither of sieges nor of sallies, catapult, bombard, nor culverin, but simply of English hexameters.

And fancy not, gentle reader, that the two were therein fiddling while Rome was burning; for the commonweal of poetry and letters, in that same critical year 1580, was in far greater danger from those same hexameters, than the common woe of Ireland (as Raleigh called it) was from the Spaniards.

Imitating the classic metres, "versifying," as it was called in contradistinction to rhyming, was becoming fast the fashion among the more learned. Stonyhurst and others had tried their hands at hexameter translations from the Latin and Greek epics, which seem to have been doggerel enough; and, ever and anon, some youthful wit broke out in iambics, sapphics, elegiacs, and what not, to the great detriment of the Queen's English and her subjects' ears.

I know not whether Mr. William Webbe, had yet given to the world any fragments of his precious hints for the "Reformation of English poetry," to the tune of his own "Tityrus, happily thou liest tumbling under a beech-tree:" but the Cambridge Malvolio, Gabriel Harvey, had succeeded in arguing Spenser, Dyer, Sidney, and probably Sidney's sister, and the whole clique of beaux-esprits round them, into following his model of

> "What might I call this tree? A laurel? O bonny laurel!
> Needes to thy bowes will I bowe this knee, and vail my bonetto;"

after snubbing the first book of "that Elvish Queene,"

which was then in manuscript, as a base declension from the classical to the romantic school.

And now Spenser (perhaps in mere melancholy wilfulness and want of purpose, for he had just been jilted by a fair maid of Kent) was wasting his mighty genius upon doggerel which he fancied antique; and some piratical publisher (Bitter Tom Nash swears, and with likelihood, that Harvey did it himself) had just given to the world,—"Three proper wittie and familiar Letters, lately past between two University men, touching the Earthquake in April last, and our English reformed Versifying," which had set all town wits a-buzzing like a swarm of flies, being none other than a correspondence between Spenser and Harvey, which was to prove to the world for ever the correctness and melody of such lines as,

"For like magnificoes, not a beck but glorious in show,
In deede most frivolous, not a looke but Tuscanish always."

Let them pass—Alma Mater has seen as bad hexameters since. But then the matter was serious. There is a story (I know not how true), that Spenser was half bullied into re-writing the "Fairy Queen" in hexameters, had not Raleigh, a true romanticist, "whose vein for ditty or amorous ode was most lofty, insolent, and passionate," persuaded him to follow his better genius. The great dramatists had not yet arisen, to form completely that truly English school, of which Spenser, unconscious of his own vast powers, was laying the foundation. And, indeed, it was not till Daniel, twenty years after, in his admirable apology for rhyme, had smashed Mr. Campion and his "eight

several kinds of classical numbers," that the matter was finally settled, and the English tongue left to go the road on which heaven had started it. So that we may excuse Raleigh's answering somewhat waspish to some quotation of Spenser's from the three letters of "Immerito and G. H."

"Tut, tut, Colin Clout, much learning has made thee mad. A good old fishwives' ballad jingle is worth all your sapphics and trimeters, and 'riff-raff thurlery bouncing.' Hey? have I you there, old lad? Do you mind that precious verse?"

"But, dear Wat, Homer and Virgil——"

"But, dear Ned, Petrarch and Ovid——"

"But, Wat, what have we that we do not owe to the ancients?"

"Ancients, quotha? Why, the legend of King Arthur, and Chevy Chase too, of which even your fellow-sinner Sidney cannot deny that every time he hears it even from a blind fiddler it stirs his heart like a trumpet-blast. Speak well of the bridge that carries you over, man! Did you find your Redcross Knight in Virgil, or such a dame as Una in old Ovid? No more than you did your Pater and Credo, you renegado baptized heathen, you!"

"Yet, surely, our younger and more barbarous taste must bow before divine antiquity, and imitate afar——"

"As dottrels do fowlers. If Homer was blind, lad, why dost not poke out thine eye? Ay, this hexameter is of an ancient house, truly, Ned Spenser, and so is many a rogue: but he cannot make way on our rough

English roads. He goes hopping and twitching in our language like a three-legged terrier over a pebble-bank, tumble and up again, rattle and crash."

"Nay, hear, now—

"See ye the blindfolded pretty god that feathered archer,
Of lovers' miseries which maketh his bloody game?[1]

True, the accent gapes in places, as I have often confessed to Harvey, but——"

"Harvey be hanged for a pedant, and the whole crew of versifiers, from Lord Dorset (but he, poor man, has been past hanging some time since) to yourself! Why delude you into playing Procrustes as he does with the Queen's English, racking one word till its joints be pulled asunder, and squeezing the next all a-heap as the Inquisitors do heretics in their banca cava? Out upon him and you, and Sidney, and the whole kin. You have not made a verse among you, and never will, which is not as lame a gosling as Harvey's own—

'Oh thou weathercocke, that stands on the top of Allhallows,
Come thy ways down, if thou dar'st for thy crown, and take the wall on us.'

"Hark, now! There is our young giant comforting his soul with a ballad. You will hear rhyme and reason together here, now. He will not miscall 'blind-folded,' 'blind-fold-ed,' I warrant; or make an 'of' and a 'which' and a 'his' carry a whole verse on their wretched little backs."

And as he spoke, Amyas, who had been grumbling

[1] Strange as it may seem, this distich is Spenser's own; and the other hexameters are all authentic.

to himself some Christmas carol, broke out full-mouthed :—

"As Joseph was a-walking
He heard an angel sing—
'This night shall be the birth night
Of Christ, our heavenly King.

His birthbed shall be neither
In housen nor in hall,
Nor in the place of paradise,
But in the oxen's stall.

He neither shall be rocked
In silver nor in gold,
But in the wooden manger
That lieth on the mould.

He neither shall be washen
With white wine nor with red,
But with the fair spring water
That on you shall be shed

He neither shall be clothed
In purple nor in pall,
But in the fair white linen
That usen babies all.'

As Joseph was a-walking
Thus did the angel sing,
And Mary's Son at midnight
Was born to be our King.

Then be you glad, good people,
At this time of the year;
And light you up your candles,
For His star it shineth clear."

"There, Edmunde Classicaster," said Raleigh, "does not that simple strain go nearer to the heart

of him who wrote "The Shepherd's Calendar," than all artificial and outlandish

'Wote ye why his mother with a veil hath covered his face?'

Why dost not answer, man?"

But Spenser was silent awhile, and then,—

"Because I was thinking rather of the rhymer than the rhyme. Good heaven! how that brave lad shames me, singing here the hymns which his mother taught him, before the very muzzles of Spanish guns; instead of bewailing unmanly, as I have done, the love which he held, I doubt not, as dear as I did even my Rosalind. This is his welcome to the winter's storm; while I, who dream, forsooth, of heavenly inspiration, can but see therein an image of mine own cowardly despair.

'Thou barren ground, whom Winter's wrath has wasted,
Art made a mirror to behold my plight.'[1]

Pah! away with frosts, icicles, and tears, and sighs——"

"And with hexameters and trimeters too, I hope," interrupted Raleigh: "and all the trickeries of self-pleasing sorrow."

"——I will set my heart to higher work, than barking at the hand which chastens me."

"Wilt put the lad into the 'Fairy Queen,' then, by my side? He deserves as good a place there, believe me, as ever a Guyon, or even as Lord Grey your Arthegall. Let us hail him. Hallo! young chanticleer of Devon! Art not afraid of a chance shot, that thou crowest so lustily upon thine own mixen?"

[1] "The Shepherd's Calendar."

"Cocks crow all night long at Christmas, Captain Raleigh, and so do I," said Amyas's cheerful voice; "but who's there with you?"

"A penitent pupil of yours—Mr. Secretary Spenser."

"Pupil of mine?" said Amyas. "I wish he'd teach me a little of his art; I could fill up my time here with making verses."

"And who would be your theme, fair sir?" said Spenser.

"No 'who' at all. I don't want to make sonnets to blue eyes, nor black either: but if I could put down some of the things I saw in the Spice Islands——"

"Ah," said Raleigh, "he would beat you out of Parnassus, Mr. Secretary. Remember, you may write about Fairyland, but he has seen it."

"And so have others," said Spenser; "it is not so far off from any one of us. Wherever is love and loyalty, great purposes, and lofty souls, even though in a hovel or a mine, there is Fairyland."

"Then Fairyland should be here, friend; for you represent love, and Leigh loyalty; while, as for great purposes and lofty souls, who so fit to stand for them, as I, being (unless my enemies and my conscience are liars both) as ambitious and as proud as Lucifer's own self?"

"Ah, Walter, Walter, why wilt always slander thyself thus?"

"Slander? Tut.—I do but give the world a fair challenge, and tell it, 'There—you know the worst of me: come on and try a fall, for either you or I must down.' Slander? Ask Leigh here, who has but known

me a fortnight, whether I am not as vain as a peacock, as selfish as a fox, as imperious as a bona roba, and ready to make a cat's paw of him or any man, if there be a chestnut in the fire: and yet the poor fool cannot help loving me, and running of my errands, and taking all my schemes and my dreams for gospel; and verily believes now, I think, that I shall be the man in the moon some day, and he my big dog."

"Well," said Amyas, half apologetically, "if you are the cleverest man in the world what harm in my thinking so?"

"Hearken to him, Edmund! He will know better when he has outgrown this same callow trick of honesty, and learnt of the great goddess Detraction how to show himself wiser than the wise, by pointing out to the world the fool's motley which peeps through the rents in the philosopher's cloak. Go to, lad! slander thy equals, envy thy betters, pray for an eye which sees spots in every sun, and for a vulture's nose to scent carrion in every rose-bed. If thy friend win a battle, show that he has needlessly thrown away his men; if he lose one, hint that he sold it; if he rise to a place, argue favour; if he fall from one, argue divine justice. Believe nothing, hope nothing, but endure all things, even to kicking, if aught may be got thereby; so shalt thou be clothed in purple and fine linen, and sit in king's palaces, and fare sumptuously every day."

"And wake with Dives in the torment," said Amyas. "Thank you for nothing, Captain."

"Go to, Misanthropos," said Spenser. "Thou hast

not yet tasted the sweets of this world's comfits, and thou railest at them?"

"The grapes are sour, lad."

"And will be to the end," said Amyas, "if they come off such a devil's tree as that. I really think you are out of your mind, Captain Raleigh, at times."

"I wish I were; for it is a troublesome, hungry, windy mind as man ever was cursed withal. But come in, lad. We were sent from the Lord Deputy to bid thee to supper. There is a dainty lump of dead horse waiting for thee."

"Send me some out, then," said matter-of-fact Amyas. "And tell his Lordship that, with his good leave, I don't stir from here till morning, if I can keep awake. There is a stir in the fort, and I expect them out on us."

"Tut, man! their hearts are broken. We know it by their deserters."

"Seeing's believing. I never trust runaway rogues. If they are false to their masters they'll be false to us."

"Well, go thy ways, old honesty; and Mr. Secretary shall give you a book to yourself in the 'Fairy Queen'—'Sir Monoculus, or the Legend of Common Sense,' eh, Edmund?"

"Monoculus?"

"Ay, Single-eye, my prince of word-coiners—won't that fit?—And give him the Cyclop's head for a device. Heigho! They may laugh that win. I am sick of this Irish work; were it not for the chance of advancement I'd sooner be driving a team of red Devons on Dartside; and now I am angry with the dear lad be-

cause he is not sick of it too. What a plague business has he to be paddling up and down, contentedly doing his duty, like any city watchman? It is an insult to the mighty aspirations of our nobler hearts,—eh, my would-be Ariosto?"

"Ah, Raleigh! you can afford to confess yourself less than some, for you are greater than all. Go on and conquer, noble heart! But as for me, I sow the wind, and I suppose I shall reap the whirlwind."

"Your harvest seems come already; what a blast that was! Hold on by me, Colin Clout, and I'll hold on by thee. So! Don't tread on that pikeman's stomach, lest he take thee for a marauding Don, and with sudden dagger slit Colin's pipe, and Colin's weasand too."

And the two stumbled away into the darkness, leaving Amyas to stride up and down as before, puzzling his brains over Raleigh's wild words and Spenser's melancholy, till he came to the conclusion that there was some mysterious connection between cleverness and unhappiness, and thanking his stars that he was neither scholar, courtier, nor poet, said grace over his lump of horseflesh when it arrived, devoured it as if it had been venison, and then returned to his pacing up and down; but this time in silence, for the night was drawing on, and there was no need to tell the Spaniards that any one was awake and watching.

So he began to think about his mother, and how she might be spending her Christmas; and then about Frank, and wondered at what grand Court festival he

was assisting, amid bright lights and sweet music and gay ladies, and how he was dressed, and whether he thought of his brother there far away on the dark Atlantic shore; and then he said his prayers and his creed; and then he tried not to think of Rose Salterne, and of course thought about her all the more. So on passed the dull hours, till it might be past eleven o'clock, and all lights were out in the battery and the shipping, and there was no sound of living thing but the monotonous tramp of the two sentinels beside him, and now and then a grunt from the party who slept under arms some twenty yards to the rear.

So he paced to and fro, looking carefully out now and then over the strip of sand-hill which lay between him and the fort; but all was blank and black, and moreover it began to rain furiously.

Suddenly he seemed to hear a rustle among the harsh sand-grass. True, the wind was whistling through it loudly enough: but that sound was not altogether like the wind. Then a soft sliding noise; something had slipped down a bank, and brought the sand down after it. Amyas stopped, crouched down beside a gun, and laid his ear to the rampart, whereby he heard clearly, as he thought, the noise of approaching feet; whether rabbits or Christians, he knew not: but he shrewdly guessed the latter.

Now Amyas was of a sober and business-like turn, at least when he was not in a passion; and thinking within himself that if he made any noise, the enemy (whether four or two-legged) would retire, and all the sport be lost, he did not call to the two sentries, who

were at the opposite ends of the battery; neither did he think it worth while to rouse the sleeping company, lest his ears should have deceived him, and the whole camp turn out to repulse the attack of a buck rabbit. So he crouched lower and lower beside the culverin, and was rewarded in a minute or two by hearing something gently deposited against the mouth of the embrasure, which, by the noise, should be a piece of timber.

"So far, so good," said he to himself; "when the scaling ladder is up, the soldier follows, I suppose. I can only humbly thank them for giving my embrasure the preference. There he comes! I hear his feet scuffling."

He could hear plainly enough some one working himself into the mouth of the embrasure: but the plague was, that it was so dark that he could not see his hand between him and the sky, much less his foe at two yards off. However, he made a pretty fair guess as to the whereabouts, and, rising softly, discharged such a blow downwards as would have split a yule log. A volley of sparks flew up from the hapless Spaniard's armour, and a grunt issued from within it, which proved that, whether he was killed or not, the blow had not improved his respiration.

Amyas felt for his head, seized it, dragged him in over the gun, sprang into the embrasure on his knees, felt for the top of the ladder, found it, hove it clean off and out, with four or five men on it, and then of course tumbled after it ten feet into the sand, roaring like a town bull to her Majesty's liege subjects in general.

Sailor-fashion, he had no armour on but a light morion and a cuirass, so he was not too much encumbered to prevent his springing to his legs instantly, and setting to work, cutting and foining right and left at every sound, for sight there was none.

Battles (as soldiers know, and newspaper editors do not) are usually fought, not as they ought to be fought, but as they can be fought; and while the literary man is laying down the law at his desk as to how many troops should be moved here, and what rivers should be crossed there, and where the cavalry should have been brought up, and when the flank should have been turned, the wretched man who has to do the work finds the matter settled for him by pestilence, want of shoes, empty stomachs, bad roads, heavy rains, hot suns, and a thousand other stern warriors who never show on paper.

So with this skirmish; "according to Cocker," it ought to have been a very pretty one; for Hercules of Pisa, who planned the sortie, had arranged it all (being a very *sans-appel* in all military science) upon the best Italian precedents, and had brought against this very hapless battery a column of a hundred to attack directly in front, a company of fifty to turn the right flank, and a company of fifty to turn the left flank, with regulations, orders, passwords, countersigns, and what not; so that if every man had had his rights (as seldom happens), Don Guzman Maria Magdalena de Soto, who commanded the sortie, ought to have taken the work out of hand, annihilated all therein. But alas! here stern fate interfered. They had

chosen a dark night, as was politic; they had waited till the moon was up, lest it should be too dark, as was politic likewise: but, just as they had started, on came a heavy squall of rain, through which seven moons would have given no light, and which washed out the plans of Hercules of Pisa as if they had been written on a schoolboy's slate. The company who were to turn the left flank walked manfully down into the sea, and never found out where they were going till they were knee-deep in water. The company who were to turn the right flank, bewildered by the utter darkness, turned their own flank so often, that tired of falling into rabbit-burrows and filling their mouths with sand, they halted and prayed to all the saints for a compass and lantern; while the centre body, who held straight on by a trackway to within fifty yards of the battery, so miscalculated that short distance, that while they thought the ditch two pikes' length off, they fell into it one over the other, and of six scaling ladders, the only one which could be found was the very one which Amyas threw down again. After which the clouds broke, the wind shifted, and the moon shone out merrily. And so was the deep policy of Hercules of Pisa, on which hung the fate of Ireland and the Papacy, decided by a ten minutes' squall.

But where is Amyas?

In the ditch, aware that the enemy is tumbling into it, but unable to find them; while the company above, finding it much too dark to attempt a counter sortie, have opened a smart fire of musketry and arrows on

things in general, whereat the Spaniards are swearing like Spaniards (I need say no more), and the Italians spitting like venomous cats; while Amyas, not wishing to be riddled by friendly balls, has got his back against the foot of the rampart, and waits on Providence.

Suddenly the moon clears; and with one more fierce volley, the English sailors, seeing the confusion, leap down from the embrasures, and to it pell-mell. Whether this also was "according to Cocker," I know not: but the sailor, then as now, is not susceptible of highly-finished drill.

Amyas is now in his element, and so are the brave fellows at his heels; and there are ten breathless, furious minutes among the sand-hills; and then the trumpets blow a recal, and the sailors drop back again by twos and threes, and are helped up into the embrasures over many a dead and dying foe; while the guns of Fort del Oro open on them, and blaze away for half-an-hour without reply; and then all is still once more. And in the meanwhile, the sortie against the Deputy's camp has fared no better, and the victory of the night remains with the English.

Twenty minutes after, Winter and the captains who were on shore were drying themselves round a peat-fire on the beach, and talking over the skirmish, when Will Cary asked—

"Where is Leigh? who has seen him? I am sadly afraid he has gone too far, and been slain."

"Slain? Never less, gentlemen!" replied the voice of the very person in question, as he stalked out of

the darkness into the glare of the fire, and shot down from his shoulders into the midst of the ring, as he might a sack of corn, a huge dark body, which was gradually seen to be a man in rich armour; who being so shot down, lay quietly where he was dropped, with his feet (luckily for him mailed) in the fire.

"I say," quoth Amyas, "some of you had better take him up, if he is to be of any use. Unlace his helm, Will Cary."

"Pull his feet out of the embers; I dare say he would have been glad enough to put us to the scarpines; but that's no reason we should put him to them."

As has been hinted, there was no love lost between Admiral Winter and Amyas; and Amyas might certainly have reported himself in a more ceremonious manner. So Winter, whom Amyas either had not seen, or had not chosen to see, asked him pretty sharply, "What the plague he had to do with bringing dead men into camp?"

"If he's dead, it's not my fault. He was alive enough when I started with him, and I kept him right end uppermost all the way; and what would you have more, sir?"

"Mr. Leigh!" said Winter, "it behoves you to speak with somewhat more courtesy, if not respect, to captains who are your elders and commanders."

"Ask your pardon, sir," said the giant, as he stood in front of the fire with the rain steaming and smoking off his armour; "but I was bred in a school where getting good service done was more esteemed than making fine speeches."

"Whatsoever school you were trained in, sir," said Winter, nettled at the hint about Drake; "it does not seem to have been one in which you learned to obey orders. Why did you not come in when the recal was sounded?"

"Because," said Amyas, very coolly, "in the first place, I did not hear it; and in the next, in my school I was taught when I had once started not to come home empty-handed."

This was too pointed; and Winter sprang up with an oath—"Do you mean to insult me, sir?"

"I am sorry, sir, that you should take a compliment to Sir Francis Drake as an insult to yourself. I brought in this gentleman because I thought he might give you good information; if he dies meanwhile, the loss will be yours, or rather the Queen's."

"Help me, then," said Cary, glad to create a diversion in Amyas's favour, "and we will bring him round;" while Raleigh rose, and catching Winter's arm, drew him aside, and began talking earnestly.

"What a murrain have you, Leigh, to quarrel with Winter?" asked two or three.

"I say, my reverend fathers and dear children, do get the Don's talking tackle free again, and leave me and the Admiral to settle it our own way."

There was more than one captain sitting in the ring: but discipline, and the degrees of rank, were not so severely defined as now; and Amyas, as a "gentleman adventurer," was, on land, in a position very difficult to be settled, though at sea he was as liable to be hanged as any other person on board;

and on the whole it was found expedient to patch the matter up. So Captain Raleigh returning, said that though Admiral Winter had doubtless taken umbrage at certain words of Mr. Leigh's, yet that he had no doubt that Mr. Leigh meant nothing thereby but what was consistent with the profession of a soldier and a gentleman, and worthy both of himself and of the Admiral.

From which proposition Amyas found it impossible to dissent; whereon Raleigh went back, and informed Winter that Leigh had freely retracted his words, and fully wiped off any imputation which Mr. Winter might conceive to have been put upon him, and so forth. So Winter returned, and Amyas said frankly enough,—

"Admiral Winter, I hope, as a loyal soldier, that you will understand thus far; that naught which has passed to-night shall in any way prevent you finding me a forward and obedient servant to all your commands, be they what they may, and a supporter of your authority among the men, and honour against the foe, even with my life. For I should be ashamed if private differences should ever prejudice by a grain the public weal."

This was a great effort of oratory for Amyas; and he therefore, in order to be safe by following precedent, tried to talk as much as he could like Sir Richard Grenvile. Of course Winter could answer nothing to it, in spite of the plain hint of private differences, but that he should not fail to show himself a captain worthy of so valiant and trusty a gentleman; whereon

the whole party turned their attention to the captive, who, thanks to Will Cary, was by this time sitting up, standing much in need of a handkerchief, and looking about him, having been unhelmed, in a confused and doleful manner.

"Take the gentleman to my tent," said Winter, "and let the surgeon see to him. Mr. Leigh, who is he?——"

"An enemy, but whether Spaniard or Italian I know not; but he seemed somebody among them, I thought the captain of a company. He and I cut at each other twice or thrice at first, and then lost each other; and after that I came on him among the sand-hills, trying to rally his men, and swearing like the mouth of the pit, whereby I guess him a Spaniard. But his men ran; so I brought him in."

"And how?" asked Raleigh. "Thou art giving us all the play but the murders and the marriages."

"Why, I bid him yield, and he would not. Then I bid him run, and he would not. And it was too pitch-dark for fighting; so I took him by the ears, and shook the wind out of him, and so brought him in."

"Shook the wind out of him?" cried Cary, amid the roar of laughter which followed. "Dost know thou hast nearly wrung his neck in two? His vizor was full of blood."

"He should have run or yielded, then," said Amyas; and getting up, slipt off to find some ale, and then to sleep comfortably in a dry burrow which he scratched out of a sandbank.

The next morning, as Amyas was discussing a

scanty breakfast of biscuit (for provisions were running very short in camp) Raleigh came up to him.

"What, eating? That's more than I have done to-day."

"Sit down, and share then."

"Nay, lad, I did not come a-begging. I have set some of my rogues to dig rabbits; but as I live, young Colbrand, you may thank your stars that you are alive to-day to eat. Poor young Cheek,—Sir John Cheek, the grammarian's son,—got his quittance last night by a Spanish pike, rushing headlong on, just as you did. But have you seen your prisoner?"

"No; nor shall, while he is in Winter's tent."

"Why not then? What quarrel have you against the Admiral, friend Bobadil? Cannot you let Francis Drake fight his own battles, without thrusting your head in between them?"

"Well, that is good! As if the quarrel was not just as much mine, and every man's in the ship. Why, when he left Drake, he left us all, did he not?"

"And what if he did? Let bygones be bygones, is the rule of a Christian, and of a wise man too, Amyas. Here the man is, at least, safe home, in favour and in power; and a prudent youth will just hold his tongue, mumchance, and swim with the stream."

"But that's just what makes me mad; to see this fellow, after deserting us there in unknown seas, win credit and rank at home here for being the first man who ever sailed back through the Straits. What had he to do with sailing back at all? As well make the fox a knight for being the first that ever jumped down

a jakes to escape the hounds. The fiercer the flight the fouler the fear, say I."

"Amyas! Amyas! thou art a hard hitter, but a soft politician."

"I am no politician, Captain Raleigh, nor ever wish to be. An honest man's my friend, and a rogue's my foe; and I'll tell both as much as long as I breathe."

"And die a poor saint," said Raleigh, laughing. "But if Winter invites you to his tent himself, you won't refuse to come?"

"Why, no, considering his years and rank; but he knows too well to do that."

"He knows too well not to do it," said Raleigh, laughing as he walked away. And verily in half-an-hour came an invitation extracted, of course, from the Admiral by Raleigh's silver tongue, which Amyas could not but obey.

"We all owe you thanks for last night's service, sir," said Winter, who had for some good reasons changed his tone. "Your prisoner is found to be a gentleman of birth and experience, and the leader of the assault last night. He has already told us more than we had hoped, for which also we are beholden to you; and, indeed, my Lord Grey has been asking for you already."

"I have, young sir," said a quiet and lofty voice; and Amyas saw limping from the inner tent the proud and stately figure of the stern Deputy, Lord Grey of Wilton, a brave and wise man, but with a naturally harsh temper, which had been soured still more by the wound which had crippled him, while yet a boy, at

the battle of Leith. He owed that limp to Mary Queen of Scots; and he did not forget the debt.

"I have been asking for you; having heard from many, both of your last night's prowess, and of your conduct and courage beyond the promise of your years, displayed in that ever-memorable voyage, which may well be ranked with the deeds of the ancient Argonauts."

Amyas bowed low; and the Lord Deputy went on, "You will needs wish to see your prisoner. You will find him such a one as you need not be ashamed to have taken, and as need not be ashamed to have been taken by you: but here he is, and will, I doubt not, answer as much for himself. Know each other better, gentlemen both: last night was an ill one for making acquaintances. Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto, know the hidalgo Amyas Leigh!"

As he spoke, the Spaniard came forward, still in his armour, all save his head, which was bound up in a handkerchief.

He was an exceedingly tall and graceful personage, of that *sangre azul* which marked high Visi-gothic descent; golden-haired and fair-skinned, with hands as small and white as a woman's; his lips were delicate, but thin, and compressed closely at the corners of the mouth; and his pale blue eye had a glassy dulness. In spite of his beauty and his carriage, Amyas shrank from him instinctively; and yet he could not help holding out his hand in return, as the Spaniard holding out his, said languidly, in most sweet and sonorous Spanish,—

"I kiss his hands and feet. The Señor speaks, I am told, my native tongue?"

"I have that honour."

"Then accept in it (for I can better express myself therein than in English, though I am not altogether ignorant of that witty and learned language) the expression of my pleasure at having fallen into the hands of one so renowned in war and travel; and of one also," he added, glancing at Amyas's giant bulk, "the vastness of whose strength, beyond that of common mortality, makes it no more shame for me to have been overpowered and carried away by him than if my captor had been a paladin of Charlemagne's."

Honest Amyas bowed and stammered, a little thrown off his balance by the unexpected assurance and cool flattery of his prisoner; but he said,—

"If you are satisfied, illustrious Señor, I am bound to be so. I only trust, that in my hurry and the darkness, I have not hurt you unnecessarily."

The Don laughed a pretty little hollow laugh: "No, kind Señor, my head, I trust, will after a few days have become united to my shoulders; and, for the present, your company will make me forget any slight discomfort."

"Pardon me, Señor; but by this daylight I should have seen that armour before."

"I doubt it not, Señor, as having been yourself also in the forefront of the battle," said the Spaniard, with a proud smile.

"If I am right, Señor, you are he who yesterday held up the standard after it was shot down."

"I do not deny that undeserved honour; and I have to thank the courtesy of you and your countrymen for having permitted me to do so with impunity."

"Ah, I heard of that brave feat," said the Lord Deputy. "You should consider yourself, Mr. Leigh, honoured by being enabled to show courtesy to such a warrior."

How long this interchange of solemn compliments, of which Amyas was getting somewhat weary, would have gone on, I know not: but at that moment Raleigh entered hastily,—

"My Lord, they have hung out a white flag, and are calling for a parley!"

The Spaniard turned pale, and felt for his sword, which was gone; and then, with a bitter laugh, murmured to himself,—"As I expected."

"I am very sorry to hear it. Would to Heaven they had simply fought it out!" said Lord Grey, half to himself; and then, "Go, Captain Raleigh, and answer them that (saving this gentleman's presence) the laws of war forbid a parley with any who are leagued with rebels against their lawful sovereign."

"But what if they wish to treat for this gentleman's ransom?"

"For their own, more likely:" said the Spaniard; "but tell them, on my part, Señor, that Don Guzman refuses to be ransomed; and will return to no camp where the commanding officer, unable to infect his captains with his own cowardice, dishonours them against their will."

"You speak sharply, Señor," said Winter, after Raleigh had gone out.

"I have reason, Señor Admiral, as you will find, I fear, ere long."

"We shall have the honour of leaving you here, for the present, sir, as Admiral Winter's guest," said the Lord Deputy.

"But not my sword, it seems."

"Pardon me, Señor; but no one has deprived you of your sword," said Winter.

"I don't wish to pain you, sir," said Amyas, "but I fear that we were both careless enough to leave it behind last night."

A flash passed over the Spaniard's face, which disclosed terrible depths of fury and hatred beneath that quiet mask, as the summer lightning displays the black abysses of the thunderstorm; but like the summer lightning it passed, almost unseen; and blandly as ever, he answered,—

"I can forgive you for such a neglect, most valiant sir, more easily than I can forgive myself. Farewell, sir! One who has lost his sword is no fit company for you." And as Amyas and the rest departed he plunged into the inner tent, stamping and writhing, gnawing his hands with rage and shame.

As Amyas came out on the battery, Yeo hailed him,—

"Master Amyas! Hillo, sir! For the love of Heaven tell me!"

"What then?"

"Is his Lordship staunch? Will he do the Lord's

work faithfully, root and branch: or will he spare the Amalekites?"

"The latter, I think, old hip-and-thigh," said Amyas, hurrying forward to hear the news from Raleigh, who appeared in sight once more.

"They ask to depart with bag and baggage," said he, when he came up.

"God do so to me, and more also, if they carry away a straw!" said Lord Grey. "Make short work of it, sir!"

"I do not know how that will be, my Lord; as I came up a captain shouted to me off the walls that there were mutineers; and, denying that he surrendered, would have pulled down the flag of truce, but the soldiers beat him off."

"A house divided against itself will not stand long, gentlemen. Tell them that I give no conditions. Let them lay down their arms, and trust in the Bishop of Rome who sent them hither, and may come to save them if he wants them. Gunners, if you see the white flag go down, open your fire instantly. Captain Raleigh, we need your counsel here. Mr. Cary, will you be my herald this time?"

"A better Protestant never went on a pleasanter errand, my Lord."

So Cary went, and then ensued an argument, as to what should be done with the prisoners in case of a surrender.

I cannot tell whether my Lord Grey meant, by offering conditions which the Spaniards would not accept, to force them into fighting the quarrel out, and

so save himself the responsibility of deciding on their fate; or whether his mere natural stubbornness, as well as his just indignation, drove him on too far to retract: but the council of war which followed was both a sad and a stormy one, and one which he had reason to regret to his dying day. What was to be done with the enemy? They already outnumbered the English; and some fifteen hundred of Desmond's wild Irish hovered in the forests round, ready to side with the winning party, or even to attack the English at the least sign of vacillation or fear. They could not carry the Spaniards away with them, for they had neither shipping nor food, not even handcuffs enough for them; and as Mackworth told Winter when he proposed it, the only plan was for him to make San Josepho a present of his ships, and swim home himself as he could. To turn loose in Ireland, as Captain Touch urged, on the other hand, seven hundred such monsters of lawlessness, cruelty, and lust, as Spanish and Italian condottieri were in those days, was as fatal to their own safety as cruel to the wretched Irish. All the captains, without exception, followed on the same side. "What was to be done, then?" asked Lord Grey, impatiently. "Would they have him murder them all in cold blood?"

And for a while every man, knowing that it must come to that, and yet not daring to say it; till Sir Warham St. Leger, the Marshal of Munster, spoke out stoutly—"Foreigners had been scoffing them too long and too truly with waging these Irish wars as if they meant to keep them alive, rather than end them.

Mercy and faith to every Irishman who would show mercy and faith, was his motto; but to invaders, no mercy. Ireland was England's vulnerable point; it might be some day her ruin; a terrible example must be made of those who dare to touch the sore. Rather pardon the Spaniards for landing in the Thames than in Ireland!"—till Lord Grey became much excited, and turning as a last hope to Raleigh, asked his opinion: but Raleigh's silver tongue was that day not on the side of indulgence. He skilfully recapitulated the arguments of his fellow-captains, improving them as he went on, till each worthy soldier was surprised to find himself so much wiser a man than he had thought; and finished by one of his rapid and passionate perorations upon his favourite theme—the West Indian cruelties of the Spaniards, ". . . . by which great tracts and fair countries are now utterly stripped of inhabitants by heavy bondage and torments unspeakable. Oh, witless Islanders!" said he, apostrophising the Irish; "would to heaven that you were here to listen to me! What other fate awaits you, if this viper, which you are so ready to take into your bosom, should be warmed to life, but to groan like the Indians, slaves to the Spaniard; but to perish like the Indians, by heavy burdens, cruel chains, plunder and ravishment; scourged, racked, roasted, stabbed, sawn in sunder, cast to feed the dogs, as simple and more righteous peoples have perished ere now by millions? And what else, I say, had been the fate of Ireland, had this invasion prospered, which God has now, by our weak hands, confounded and brought to nought?

Shall we then answer it, my Lord, either to our conscience, our God, or our Queen, if we shall set loose men (not one of whom, I warrant, but is stained with murder on murder) to go and fill up the cup of their iniquity among these silly sheep? Have not their native wolves, their barbarous chieftains, shorn, peeled, and slaughtered them enough already, but we must add this pack of foreign wolves to the number of their tormentors, and fit the Desmond with a bodyguard of seven, yea, seven hundred devils worse than himself? Nay, rather let us do violence to our own human nature, and show ourselves in appearance rigorous, that we may be kind indeed; lest while we presume to be over-merciful to the guilty, we prove ourselves to be over-cruel to the innocent."

"Captain Raleigh, Captain Raleigh," said Lord Grey, "the blood of these men be on your head!"

"It ill befits your Lordship," answered Raleigh, "to throw on your subordinates the blame of that which your reason approves as necessary."

"I should have thought, sir, that one so noted for ambition as Captain Raleigh would have been more careful of the favour of that Queen for whose smiles he is said to be so longing a competitor. If you have not yet been of her counsels, sir, I can tell you you are not likely to be. She will be furious when she hears of this cruelty."

Lord Grey had lost his temper: but Raleigh kept his, and answered quietly—

"Her Majesty shall at least not find me among the number of those who prefer her favour to her safety,

and abuse to their own profit that over-tenderness and mercifulness of heart which is the only blemish (and yet rather, like a mole on a fair cheek, but a new beauty) in her manifold perfections."

At this juncture Cary returned.

"My Lord," said he, in some confusion, "I have proposed your terms; but the captains still entreat for some mitigation; and, to tell you truth, one of them has insisted on accompanying me hither to plead his cause himself."

"I will not see him, sir. Who is he?"

"His name is Sebastian of Modena, my Lord."

"Sebastian of Modena? What think you, gentlemen? May we make an exception in favour of so famous a soldier?"

"So villanous a cut-throat," said Zouch to Raleigh, under his breath.

All, however, were for speaking with so famous a man; and in came, in full armour, a short, bull-necked Italian, evidently of immense strength, of the true Cæsar Borgia stamp.

"Will you please to be seated, sir?" said Lord Grey, coldly.

"I kiss your hands, most illustrious: but I do not sit in an enemy's camp. Ha, my friend Zouch! How has your Signoria fared since we fought side by side at Lepanto? So you, too, are here, sitting in council on the hanging of me."

"What is your errand, sir? Time is short," said the Lord Deputy.

"Corpo di Bacco! It has been long enough all

the morning, for my rascals have kept me and my friend the Colonel Hercules (whom you know, doubtless) prisoners in our tents at the pike's point. My Lord Deputy, I have but a few words. I shall thank you to take every soldier in the fort,—Italian, Spaniard, and Irish,—and hang them up as high as Haman, for a set of mutinous cowards, with the arch-traitor San Josepho at their head."

"I am obliged to you for your offer, sir, and shall deliberate presently as to whether I shall not accept it."

"But as for us captains, really your Excellency must consider that we are gentlemen born, and give us either buena querra, as the Spaniards say, or a fair chance for life; and so to my business."

"Stay, sir. Answer this first. Have you or yours any commission to show either from the King of Spain or any other potentate?"

"Never a one but the cause of Heaven and our own swords. And with them, my Lord, we are ready to meet any gentlemen of your camp, man to man, with our swords only, half-way between your leaguer and ours; and I doubt not that your Lordship will see fair play. Will any gentleman accept so civil an offer? There sits a tall youth in that corner who would suit me very well. Will any fit my gallant comrades with half-an-hour's punto and stoccado?"

There was a silence, all looking at the Lord Deputy, whose eyes were kindling in a very ugly way.

"No answer? Then I must proceed to exhortation. So! Will that be sufficient?"

And walking composedly across the tent, the fearless ruffian quietly stooped down, and smote Amyas Leigh full in the face.

Up sprang Amyas, heedless of all the august assembly, and with a single buffet felled him to the earth.

"Excellent!" said he, rising unabashed. "I can always trust my instinct. I knew the moment I saw him that he was a cavalier worth letting blood. Now, sir, your sword and harness, and I am at your service outside!"

The solemn and sententious Englishmen were altogether taken aback by the Italian's impudence; but Zouch settled the matter.

"Most noble Captain, will you be pleased to recollect a certain little occurrence at Messina, in the year 1575? For if you do not, I do; and beg to inform this gentleman that you are unworthy of his sword, and had you, unluckily for you, been an Englishman, would have found the fashions of our country so different from your own that you would have been then hanged, sir, and probably may be so still."

The Italian's sword flashed out in a moment: but Lord Grey interfered.

"No fighting here, gentlemen. That may wait; and, what is more, shall wait till—Strike their swords down, Raleigh, Mackworth! Strike their swords down! Colonel Sebastian, you will be pleased to return as you came, in safety, having lost nothing, as (I frankly tell you) you have gained nothing, by your

wild bearing here. We shall proceed to deliberate on your fate."

"I trust, my Lord," said Amyas, "that you will spare this braggart's life, at least for a day or two. For in spite of Captain Zouch's warning, I must have to do with him yet, or my cheek will rise up in judgment against me at the last day."

"Well spoken, lad," said the Colonel as he swung out. "So! worth a reprieve, by this sword, to have one more rapier-rattle before the gallows! Then I take back no further answer, my Lord Deputy? Not even our swords, our virgin blades, Signor, the soldier's cherished bride? Shall we go forth weeping widowers, and leave to strange embrace the lovely steel?"

"None, sir, by heaven!" said he, waxing wroth. "Do you come hither, pirates as you are, to dictate terms upon a foreign soil? Is it not enough to have set up here the Spanish flag, and claimed the land of Ireland as the Pope's gift to the Spaniard; violated the laws of nations, and the solemn treaties of princes, under colour of a mad superstition?"

"Superstition, my Lord? Nothing less. Believe a philosopher who has not said a pater or an ave for seven years past at least. *Quod tango credo*, is my motto; and though I am bound to say, under pain of the Inquisition, that the most holy Father the Pope has given this land of Ireland to his most Catholic Majesty the King of Spain, Queen Elizabeth having forfeited her title to it by heresy,—why, my Lord, I believe it as little as you do. I believe that Ireland would have been mine, if I had won it; I believe re-

ligiously that it is not mine, now I have lost it. What is, is, and a fig for priests; to-day to thee, to-morrow to me. Addio,"—and out he swung.

"There goes a most gallant rascal," said the Lord Deputy.

"And a most rascally gallant," said Zouch. "The murder of his own page, of which I gave him a remembrancer, is among the least of his sins."

"And now, Captain Raleigh," said Lord Grey, "as you have been so earnest in preaching this butchery, I have a right to ask none but you to practise it."

Raleigh bit his lip, and replied by the "quip courteous,"—

"I am at least a man, my Lord, who thinks it shame to allow others to do that which I dare not do myself."

Lord Grey might probably have returned "the countercheck quarrelsome," had not Mackworth risen;—

"And I, my Lord, being, in that matter at least, one of Captain Raleigh's kidney, will just go with him to see that he takes no harm by being bold enough to carry out an ugly business, and serving these rascals as their countrymen served Mr. Oxenham."

"I bid you good morning, then, gentlemen, though I cannot bid you God speed," said Lord Grey; and sitting down again, covered his face with his hands, and, to the astonishment of all bystanders, burst, say the chroniclers, into tears.

Amyas followed Raleigh out. The latter was pale, but determined, and very wroth against the Deputy.

"Does the man take me for a hangman?" said he, "that he speaks to me thus? But such is the way of the great. If you neglect your duty, they haul you over the coals; if you do it, you must do it on your own responsibility. Farewell, Amyas; you will not shrink from me as a butcher when I return?"

"God forbid! But how will you do it?"

"March one company in, and drive them forth, and let the other cut them down as they come out.—Pah!"

. . . . .

It was done. Right or wrong, it was done. The shrieks and curses had died away, and the Fort del Oro was a red shambles, which the soldiers were trying to cover from the sight of heaven and earth, by dragging the bodies into the ditch, and covering them with the ruins of the rampart; while the Irish, who had beheld from the woods that awful warning, fled trembling into the deepest recesses of the forest. It was done; and it never needed to be done again. The hint was severe, but it was sufficient. Many years passed before a Spaniard set foot again in Ireland.

The Spanish and Italian officers were spared, and Amyas had Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto duly adjudged to him, as his prize by right of war. He was, of course, ready enough to fight Sebastian of Modena: but Lord Grey forbade the duel: blood enough had been shed already. The next question was, where to bestow Don Guzman till his ransom should arrive; and as Amyas could not well deliver the gallant Don into the safe custody of Mrs. Leigh at

Burrough, and still less into that of Frank at Court, he was fain to write to Sir Richard Grenvile, and ask his advice, and in the meanwhile keep the Spaniard with him upon parole, which he frankly gave,—saying that as for running away, he had nowhere to run to; and as for joining the Irish he had no mind to turn pig; and Amyas found him, as shall be hereafter told, pleasant company enough. But one morning Raleigh entered,—

"I have done you a good turn, Leigh, if you think it one. I have talked St. Leger into making you my lieutenant, and giving you the custody of a right pleasant hermitage—some castle Shackatory or other in the midst of a big bog, where time will run swift and smooth with you, between hunting wild Irish, snaring snipes, and drinking yourself drunk with usquebaugh over a turf fire."

"I'll go," quoth Amyas; "anything for work." So he went and took possession of his lieutenancy and his black robber tower, and there passed the rest of the winter, fighting or hunting all day, and chatting and reading all the evening with Señor Don Guzman, who, like a good soldier of fortune, made himself thoroughly at home, and a general favourite with the soldiers.

At first, indeed, his Spanish pride and stateliness, and Amyas's English taciturnity, kept the two apart somewhat; but they soon began, if not to trust at least to like each other; and Don Guzman told Amyas, bit by bit, who he was, of what an ancient house, and of what a poor one; and laughed over the very small chance of his ransom being raised, and the certainty

that, at least, it could not come for a couple of years, seeing that the only De Soto who had a penny to spare was a fat old dean at St. Yago de Leon, in the Caraccas, at which place Don Guzman had been born. This of course led to much talk about the West Indies, and the Don was as much interested to find that Amyas had been one of Drake's world-famous crew, as Amyas was to find that his captive was the grandson of none other than that most terrible of man-hunters, Don Ferdinando de Soto, the conqueror of Florida, of whom Amyas had read many a time in Las Casas, "as the captain of tyrants, the notoriousest and most experimented amongst them that have done the most hurts, mischiefs, and destructions in many realms." And often enough his blood boiled, and he had much ado to recollect that the speaker was his guest, as Don Guzman chatted away about his grandfather's hunts of innocent women and children, murders of caciques, and burnings alive of guides, "*pour encourager les autres*," without, seemingly, the least feeling that the victims were human beings or subjects for human pity; anything, in short, but heathen dogs, enemies of God, servants of the devil, to be used by the Christian when he needed, and when not needed killed down as cumberers of the ground. But Don Guzman was a most finished gentleman nevertheless; and told many a good story of the Indies, and told it well; and over and above his stories, he had among his baggage two books,—the one Antonio Galvano's "Discoveries of the World," a mine of winter evening amusement to Amyas; and the other, a manuscript book, which,

perhaps, it had been well for Amyas had he never seen. For it was none other than a sort of rough journal which Don Guzman had kept as a lad, when he went down with the Adelantado Gonzales Ximenes de Casada, from Peru to the River of Amazons, to look for the golden country of El Dorado, and the city of Manoa, which stands in the midst of the White Lake, and equals or surpasses in glory even the palace of the Inca Huaynacapac; "all the vessels of whose house and kitchen are of gold and silver, and in his wardrobe statues of gold which seemed giants, and figures in proportion and bigness of all the beasts, birds, trees, and herbs of the earth, and the fishes of the water; and ropes, budgets, chests, and troughs of gold; yea, and a garden of pleasure in an Island near Puna, where they went to recreate themselves when they would take the air of the sea, which had all kind of garden herbs, flowers, and trees of gold and silver of an invention and magnificence till then never seen."

Now the greater part of this treasure (and be it remembered that these wonders were hardly exaggerated, and that there were many men alive then who had beheld them, as they had worse things, "with their corporal and mortal eyes") was hidden by the Indians when Pizarro conquered Peru and slew Atahuallpa, son of Huaynacapac; at whose death, it was said, one of the Inca's younger brothers fled out of Peru, and taking with him a great army, vanquished all that tract which lieth between the great Rivers of Amazons and Baraquan, otherwise called Maranon and Orenoque.

There he sits to this day, beside the golden lake, in the golden city which is in breadth a three days' journey, covered, he and his court, with gold dust from head to foot, waiting for the fulfilment of the ancient prophecy which was written in the temple of Caxamarca, where his ancestors worshipped of old; that heroes shall come out of the West, and lead him back across the forests to the kingdom of Peru, and restore him to the glory of his forefathers.

Golden phantom! so possible, so probable, to imaginations which were yet reeling before the actual and veritable prodigies of Peru, Mexico, and the East Indies. Golden phantom! which has cost already the lives of thousands, and shall yet cost more; from Diego de Ordas, and Juan Corteso, and many another, who went forth on the quest by the Andes, and by the Orinoco, and by the Amazons; Antonio Sedenno, with his ghastly caravan of manacled Indians, "on whose dead carcasses the tigers being fleshed, assaulted the Spaniards;" Augustine Delgado, who "came to a cacique, who entertained him with all kindness, and gave him beside much gold and slaves, three nymphs very beautiful, which bare the names of three provinces, Guanba, Gotoguane, and Maiarare. To requite which manifold courtesies, he carried off, not only all the gold, but all the Indians he could seize, and took them in irons to Cubagua, and sold them for slaves; after which, Delgado was shot in the eye by an Indian, of which hurt he died;" Pedro d'Orsua, who found the cinnamon forests of Loxas, "whom his men murdered, and afterwards beheaded Lady Anes his

wife, who forsook not her lord in all his travels unto death," and many another, who has vanished with valiant comrades at his back into the green gulfs of the primæval forests, never to emerge again. Golden phantom! man-devouring, whose maw is never satiate with souls of heroes; fatal to Spain, more fatal still to England upon that shameful day, when the last of Elizabeth's heroes shall lay down his head upon the block, nominally for having believed what all around him believed likewise till they found it expedient to deny it in order to curry favour with the crowned cur who betrayed him, really because he alone dared to make one last protest in behalf of liberty and Protestantism against the incoming night of tyranny and superstition. Little thought Amyas, as he devoured the pages of that manuscript, that he was laying a snare for the life of the man whom, next to Drake and Grenvile, he most admired on earth.

But Don Guzman, on the other hand, seemed to have an instinct that that book might be a fatal gift to his captor; for one day, ere Amyas had looked into it, he began questioning the Don about El Dorado. Whereon Don Guzman replied with one of those smiles of his, which (as Amyas said afterwards) was so abominably like a sneer. that he had often hard work to keep his hands off the man—

"Ah! You have been eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, Señor? Well; if you have any ambition to follow many another brave captain to the pit, I know no shorter or easier path than is contained in that little book."

"I have never opened your book," said Amyas; "your private manuscripts are no concern of mine: but my man who recovered your baggage read part of it, knowing no better; and now you are at liberty to tell me as little as you like."

The "man," it should be said, was none other than Salvation Yeo, who had attached himself by this time inseparably to Amyas, in quality of body-guard; and, as was common enough in those days, had turned soldier for the nonce, and taken under his patronage two or three rusty bases (swivels) and falconets (four-pounders), which grinned harmlessly enough from the tower top across the cheerful expanse of bog.

Amyas once asked him, how he reconciled this Irish sojourn with his vow to find his little maid? Yeo shook his head.

"I can't tell, sir, but there's something that makes me always to think of you when I think of her; and that's often enough, the Lord knows. Whether it is that I ben't to find the dear withour your help; or whether it is your pleasant face puts me in mind of hers; or what, I can't tell; but don't you part me from you, sir, for I'm like Ruth, and where you lodge I lodge; and where you go I go; and where you die—though I shall die many a year first—there I'll die, I hope and trust; for I can't abear you out of my sight; and that's the truth thereof."

So Yeo remained with Amyas, while Cary went elsewhere with Sir Warham St. Leger, and the two friends met seldom for many months; so that Amyas's only companion was Don Guzman, who, as he grew

more familiar, and more careless about what he said and did in his captor's presence, often puzzled and scandalised him by his waywardness. Fits of deep melancholy alternated with bursts of Spanish boastfulness, utterly astonishing to the modest and sober-minded Englishman, who would often have fancied him inspired by usquebaugh, had he not had ocular proof of his extreme abstemiousness.

"Miserable?" said he, one night in one of these fits. "And have I not a right to be miserable?—Why should I not curse the virgin and all the saints, and die? I have not a friend, not a ducat on earth; not even a sword—hell and the furies! It was my all: the only bequest I ever had from my father, and I lived by it and earned by it. Two years ago I had as pretty a sum of gold as cavalier could wish—and now!"—

"What is become of it, then? I cannot hear that our men plundered you of any."

"Your men? No, Señor! What fifty men dared not have done, one woman did! a painted, patched, fucused, periwigged, bolstered, Charybdis, cannibal, Megæra, Lamia! Why did I ever go near that cursed Naples, the common sewer of Europe? whose women, I believe, would be swallowed up by Vesuvius to-morrow, if it were not that Belphegor is afraid of their making the pit itself too hot to hold him. Well, sir, she had all of mine and more; and when all was gone in wine and dice, woodcocks' brains and ortolans' tongues, I met the witch walking with another man. I had a sword and a dagger; I gave him the first (though the dog fought well enough, to give him his

due), and her the second; left them lying across each other, and fled for my life:—and here I am! after twenty years of fighting, from the Levant to the Orellana—for I began ere I had a hair on my chin—and this is the end!—No, it is not! I'll have that El Dorado yet! the Adelantado made Berreo, when he gave him his daughter, swear that he would hunt for it, through life and death.—We'll see who finds it first, he or I. He's a bungler; Orsua was a bungler—Pooh! Cortes and Pizarro? we'll see whether there are not as good Castilians as they left still. I can do it, Señor. I know a track, a plan; over the Llanos is the road; and I'll be Emperor of Manoa yet—possess the jewels of all the Incas; and gold, gold! Pizarro was a beggar to what I will be!"

"Conceive, sir," he broke forth during another of these peacock fits, as Amyas and he were riding along the hill-side; "conceive! with forty chosen cavaliers (what need of more?) I present myself before the golden king, trembling amid his myriad guards at the new miracle of the mailed centaurs of the West; and without dismounting, I approach his throne, lift the crucifix which hangs around my neck, and pressing it to my lips, present it for the adoration of the idolater, and give him his alternative; that which Gayferos and the Cid, my ancestors, offered the Soldan and the Moor—baptism or death! He hesitates; perhaps smiles scornfully upon my little band; I answer him by deeds, as Don Ferdinando, my illustrious grandfather, answered Atahuallpa at Peru, in sight of all his court and camp."

"With your lance-point, as Gayferos did the Soldan?" asked Amyas, amused.

"No, sir; persuasion first, for the salvation of a soul is at stake. Not with the lance-point, but the spur, sir, thus!"—

And striking his heels into his horse's flanks, he darted off at full speed.

"The Spanish traitor!" shouted Yeo. "He's going to escape! Shall we shoot, sir? Shall we shoot?"

"For heaven's sake, no!" said Amyas, looking somewhat blank, nevertheless, for he much doubted whether the whole was not a ruse on the part of the Spaniard, and he knew how impossible it was for his fifteen stone of flesh to give chase to the Spaniard's twelve. But he was soon reassured; the Spaniard wheeled round towards him, and began to put the rough hackney through all the paces of the manège with a grace and skill which won applause from the beholders.

"Thus!" he shouted waving his hand to Amyas, between his curvets and caracoles, "did my illustrious grandfather exhibit to the Paynim emperor the prowess of a Castilian cavalier? Thus!—and thus! —and thus, at last he dashed up to his very feet, as I to yours, and bespattering that unbaptized visage with his Christian bridlefoam, pulled up his charger on his haunches, thus!"—

And (as was to be expected from a blown Irish garron on a peaty Irish hill-side) down went the hapless hackney on his tail, away went his heels a yard in front of him, and ere Don Guzman could "avoid

his selle," horse and man rolled over into a neighbouring bog-hole.

"After pride comes a fall," quoth Yeo with unmoved visage as he lugged him out.

"And what would you do with the Emperor at last?" asked Amyas when the Don had been scrubbed somewhat clean with a bunch of rushes. "Kill him, as your grandfather did Atahuallpa?"

"My grandfather," answered the Spaniard indignantly, "was one of those, who to their eternal honour, protested to the last against that most cruel and unknightly massacre. He could be terrible to the heathen; but he kept his plighted word, sir, and taught me to keep mine, as you have seen to-day."

"I have, Señor," said Amyas. "You might have given us the slip easily enough just now, and did not. Pardon me if I have offended you."

The Spaniard (who, after all, was cross principally with himself and the "unlucky mare's son," as the old romances have it, which had played him so scurvy a trick) was all smiles again forthwith; and Amyas, as they chatted on, could not help asking him next—

"I wonder why you are so frank about your own intentions to an enemy like me, who will surely forestal you if he can."

"Sir, a Spaniard needs no concealment, and fears no rivalry. He is the soldier of the cross, and in it he conquers, like Constantine of old. Not that you English are not very heroes: but you have not, sir, and you cannot have, who have forsworn our Lady and the choir of saints, the same divine protection,

the same celestial mission, which enables the Catholic cavalier single-handed to chase a thousand Paynims."

And Don Guzman crossed himself devoutly, and muttered half-a-dozen Ave Marias in succession, while Amyas rode silently by his side, utterly puzzled at this strange compound of shrewdness with fanaticism, of perfect high-breeding with a boastfulness which in an Englishman would have been the sure mark of vulgarity.

At last came a letter from Sir Richard Grenvile, complimenting Amyas on his success and promotion, bearing a long and courtly message to Don Guzman (whom Grenville had known when he was in the Mediterranean, at the battle of Lepanto), and offering to receive him as his own guest at Bideford, till his ransom should arrive; a proposition which the Spaniard (who of course was getting sufficiently tired of the Irish bogs) could not but gladly accept; and one of Winter's ships, returning to England in the spring of 1581, delivered duly at the quay of Bideford the body of Don Guzman Maria Magdalena. Raleigh, after forming for that summer one of the triumvirate by which Munster was governed after Ormond's departure, at last got his wish, and departed for England and the court; and Amyas was left alone with the snipes and yellow mantles for two more weary years.

CHAPTER X.

HOW THE MAYOR OF BIDEFORD BAITED HIS HOOK WITH HIS OWN FLESH.

"And therewith he blent, and cried ha!
As though he had been stricken to the harte."
Palamon and Arcite

So it befell to Chaucer's knight in prison; and so it befell also to Don Guzman; and it befell on this wise.

He settled down quietly enough at Bideford on his parole, in better quarters than he had occupied for many a day, and took things as they came, like a true soldier of fortune; till, after he had been with Grenvile hardly a month, old Salterne the Mayor came to supper.

Now Don Guzman, however much he might be puzzled at first at our strange English ways of asking burghers and such low-bred folk to eat and drink above the salt, in the company of noble persons, was quite gentleman enough to know that Richard Grenvile was gentleman enough to do only what was correct, and according to the customs and proprieties. So after shrugging the shoulders of his spirit, he submitted to eat and drink at the same board with a tradesman who sat at a desk, and made up ledgers, and took apprentices; and hearing him talk with Grenvile

neither unwisely nor in a vulgar fashion, actually before the evening was out condescended to exchange words with him himself. Whereon he found him a very prudent and courteous person, quite aware of the Spaniard's superior rank, and making him feel in every sentence, that he was aware thereof; and yet holding his own opinion, and asserting his own rights as a wise elder, in a fashion which the Spaniard had only seen before among the merchant princes of Genoa and Venice.

At the end of supper, Salterne asked Grenvile to do his humble roof the honour, etc. etc., of supping with him the next evening, and then turning to the Don, said quite frankly, that he knew how great a condescension it would be on the part of a nobleman of Spain to sit at the board of a simple merchant: but that if the Spaniard deigned to do him such a favour, he would find that the cheer was fit enough for any rank, whatsoever the company might be; which invitation Don Guzman, being on the whole glad enough of anything to amuse him, graciously condescended to accept, and gained thereby an excellent supper, and, if he had chosen to drink it, much good wine.

Now Mr. Salterne was, of course, as a wise merchant, as ready as any man for an adventure to foreign parts, as was afterwards proved by his great exertions in the settlement of Virginia; and he was, therefore, equally ready to rack the brains of any guest whom he suspected of knowing anything concerning strange lands; and so he thought no shame, first to try to

loose his guest's tongue by much good sack, and next to ask him prudent and well-concocted questions concerning the Spanish main, Peru, the Moluccas, China, the Indies, and all parts.

The first of which schemes failed; for the Spaniard was as abstemious as any monk, and drank little but water; the second succeeded not over well, for the Spaniard was as cunning as any fox, and answered little but wind.

In the midst of which tongue-fence in came the Rose of Torridge, looking as beautiful as usual; and hearing what they were upon, added, artlessly enough, her questions to her father's: to her Don Guzman could not but answer; and without revealing any very important commercial secrets, gave his host and his host's daughter a very amusing evening.

Now little Eros, though spirits like Frank Leigh's may choose to call him (as, perhaps, he really is to them) the eldest of the gods, and the son of Jove and Venus, yet is reported by other equally good authorities, as Burton has set forth in his "Anatomy of Melancholy," to be after all only the child of idleness and fulness of bread. To which scandalous calumny the thoughts of Don Guzman's heart gave at least a certain colour; for he being idle (as captives needs must be), and also full of bread (for Sir Richard kept a very good table), had already looked round for mere amusement's sake after some one with whom to fall in love. Lady Grenvile, as nearest, was, I blush to say, thought of first: but the Spaniard was a man of honour, and Sir Richard his host; so he put away

from his mind (with a self-denial on which he plumed himself much) the pleasure of a chase equally exciting to his pride and his love of danger. As for the sinfulness of the said chase, he of course thought no more of that than other southern Europeans did then, or than (I blush again to have to say it) the English did afterwards in the days of the Stuarts. Nevertheless, he had put Lady Grenvile out of his mind; and so left room to take Rose Salterne into it, not with any distinct purpose of wronging her: but, as I said before, half to amuse himself, and half, too, because he could not help it. For there was an innocent freshness about the Rose of Torridge, fond as she was of being admired, which was new to him and most attractive. "The train of the peacock," as he said to himself, "and yet the heart of the dove," made so charming a combination, that if he could have persuaded her to love no one but him, perhaps he might become fool enough to love no one but her. And at that thought he was seized with a very panic of prudence, and resolved to keep out of her way; and yet the days ran slowly, and Lady Grenvile when at home was stupid enough to talk and think about nothing but her husband; and when she went to Stow, and left the Don alone in one corner of the great house at Bideford, what could he do but lounge down to the butt-gardens to show off his fine black cloak and fine black feather, see the shooting, have a game or two of rackets with the youngsters, a game or two of bowls with the elders, and get himself invited home to supper by Mr. Salterne?

And there, of course, he had it all his own way, and ruled the roast (which he was fond enough of doing) right royally, not only on account of his rank, but because he had something to say worth hearing, as a travelled man. For those times were the day-dawn of English commerce; and not a merchant in Bideford, or in all England, but had his imagination all on fire with projects of discoveries, companies, privileges, patents, and settlements; with gallant rivalry of the brave adventures of Sir Edward Osborne and his new London Company of Turkey Merchants; with the privileges just granted by the Sultan Murad Khan to the English; with the worthy Levant voyages of Roger Bodenham in the great bark Aucher, and of John Fox, and Lawrence Aldersey, and John Rule; and with hopes from the vast door for Mediterranean trade, which the crushing of the Venetian power at Famagusta in Cyprus, and the alliance made between Elizabeth and the Grand Turk, had just thrown open. So not a word could fall from the Spaniard about the Mediterranean but took root at once in right fertile soil. Besides, Master Edmund Hogan had been on a successful embassy to the Emperor of Morocco; John Hawkins and George Fenner had been to Guinea (and with the latter Mr. Walter Wren, a Bideford man), and had traded there for musk and civet, gold and grain; and African news was becoming almost as valuable as West Indian. Moreover, but two months before had gone from London Captain Hare in the bark Minion, for Brazil, and a company of adventurers with him, with Sheffield hardware, and "Devonshire

and northern kersies," hollands and "Manchester cottons," for there was a great opening for English goods by the help of one John Whithall, who had married a Spanish heiress, and had an ingenio and slaves in Santos. (Don't smile, reader, or despise the day of small things, and those who sowed the seed whereof you reap the mighty harvest.) In the meanwhile, Drake had proved not merely the possibility of plundering the American coasts, but of establishing an East Indian trade; Frobisher and Davis, worthy forefathers of our Parrys and Franklins, had begun to bore their way upward through the northern ice, in search of a passage to China which should avoid the dangers of the Spanish seas; and Anthony Jenkinson, not the least of English travellers, had, in six-and-twenty years of travel in behalf of the Muscovite Company, penetrated into not merely Russia and the Levant, but Persia and Armenia, Bokhara, Tartary, Siberia, and those waste Arctic shores where, thirty years before, the brave Sir Hugh Willoughby,

> "In Arzina caught,
> Perished with all his crew."

Everywhere English commerce, under the genial sunshine of Elizabeth's wise rule, was spreading and taking root; and as Don Guzman talked with his new friends, he soon saw (for he was shrewd enough) that they belonged to a race which must be exterminated if Spain intended to become (as she did intend) the mistress of the world; and that it was not enough for Spain to have seized in the Pope's name the whole new world, and claimed the exclusive right to sail

the seas of America; not enough to have crushed the Hollanders; not enough to have degraded the Venetians into her bankers, and the Genoese into her mercenaries; not enough to have incorporated into herself, with the kingdom of Portugal, the whole East Indian trade of Portugal, while these fierce islanders remained to assert, with cunning policy and texts of Scripture, and, if they failed, with sharp shot and cold steel, free seas and free trade for all the nations upon earth. He saw it, and his countrymen saw it too: and therefore the Spanish Armada came: but of that hereafter. And Don Guzman knew also, by hard experience, that these same islanders, who sat in Salterne's parlour talking broad Devon through their noses, were no mere counters of money and hucksters of goods: but men who, though they thoroughly hated fighting, and loved making money instead, could fight, upon occasion, after a very dogged and terrible fashion, as well as the bluest blood in Spain; and who sent out their merchant ships armed up to the teeth, and filled with men who had been trained from childhood to use those arms, and had orders to use them without mercy if either Spaniard, Portugal, or other created being dared to stop their money-making. And one evening he waxed quite mad, when, after having civilly enough hinted that if Englishmen came where they had no right to come, they might find themselves sent back again, he was answered by a volley of—

"We'll see that, sir."

"Depends on who says 'No right.'"

"You found might right," said another, "when you claimed the Indian seas; we may find right might when we try them."

"Try them, then, gentlemen, by all means, if it shall so please your worships; and find the sacred flag of Spain as invincible as ever was the Roman eagle."

"We have, sir. Did you ever hear of Francis Drake?"

"Or of George Fenner and the Portugals at the Azores, one against seven?"

"Or of John Hawkins, at St. Juan d'Ulloa?"

"You are insolent burghers," said Don Guzman, and rose to go.

"Sir," said old Salterne, "as you say, we are burghers and plain men, and some of us have forgotten ourselves a little, perhaps; we must beg you to forgive our want of manners, and to put it down to the strength of my wine; for insolent we never meant to be, especially to a noble gentleman and a foreigner."

But the Don would not be pacified; and walked out, calling himself an ass and a blinkard for having demeaned himself to such a company, forgetting that he had brought it on himself.

Salterne (prompted by the great devil Mammon) came up to him next day, and begged pardon again; promising, moreover, that none of those who had been so rude should be henceforth asked to meet him, if he would deign to honour his house once more. And the Don actually was appeased, and

went there the very next evening, sneering at himself the whole time for going.

"Fool that I am! that girl has bewitched me, I believe. Go I must, and eat my share of dirt, for her sake."

So he went; and, cunningly enough, hinted to old Salterne that he had taken such a fancy to him, and felt so bound by his courtesy and hospitality, that he might not object to tell him things which he would not mention to every one; for that the Spaniards were not jealous of single traders, but of any general attempt to deprive them of their hard-earned wealth: that, however, in the meanwhile, there were plenty of opportunities for one man here and there to enrich himself, etc.

Old Salterne, shrewd as he was, had his weak point, and the Spaniard had touched it; and delighted at this opportunity of learning the mysteries of the Spanish monopoly, he often actually set Rose on to draw out the Don, without a fear (so blind does money make men) lest she might be herself drawn in. For, first, he held it as impossible that she would think of marrying a Popish Spaniard as of marrying the man in the moon; and, next, as impossible that he would think of marrying a burgher's daughter as of marrying a negress; and trusted that the religion of the one, and the family pride of the other, would keep them as separate as beings of two different species. And as for love without marriage, if such a possibility ever crossed him, the thought was rendered absurd; on Rose's part by her virtue, on which the

old man (and rightly) would have staked every farthing he had on earth; and on the Don's part, by a certain human fondness for the continuity of the carotid artery and the parts adjoining, for which (and that not altogether justly, seeing that Don Guzman cared as little for his own life as he did for his neighbour's) Mr. Salterne gave him credit. And so it came to pass, that for weeks and months, the merchant's house was the Don's favourite haunt, and he saw the Rose of Torridge daily, and the Rose of Torridge heard him.

And as for her, poor child, she had never seen such a man. He had, or seemed to have, all the high-bred grace of Frank, and yet he was cast in a manlier mould; he had just enough of his nation's proud self-assertion to make a woman bow before him as before a superior, and yet tact enough to let it very seldom degenerate into that boastfulness of which the Spaniards were then so often and so justly accused. He had marvels to tell by flood and field as many and more than Amyas; and he told them with a grace and an eloquence of which modest, simple, old Amyas possessed nothing. Besides, he was on the spot, and the Leighs were not, nor indeed were any of her old lovers; and what could she do but amuse herself with the only person who came to hand?

So thought, in time, more ladies than she; for the country, the north of it at least, was all but bare just then of young gallants, what with the Netherland wars and the Irish wars; and the Spaniard became soon welcome at every house for many a mile round, and made use of his welcome so freely, and received

so much unwonted attention from fair young dames, that his head might have been a little turned, and Rose Salterne have thereby escaped, had not Sir Richard delicately given him to understand that in spite of the free and easy manners of English ladies, brothers were just as jealous, and ladies' honours at least as inexpugnable, as in the land of demureness and Duennas. Don Guzman took the hint well enough, and kept on good terms with the country gentlemen as with their daughters; and to tell the truth, the cunning soldier of fortune found his account in being intimate with all the ladies he could, in order to prevent old Salterne from fancying that he had any peculiar predilection for Mistress Rose.

Nevertheless, Mr. Salterne's parlour being nearest to him, still remained his most common haunt; where, while he discoursed for hours about

> "Antres vast and deserts idle,
> And of the cannibals that each other eat,
> Of Anthropophagi, and men whose heads
> Do grow beneath their shoulders,"

to the boundless satisfaction of poor Rose's fancy, he took care to season his discourse with scraps of mercantile information, which kept the old merchant always expectant and hankering for more, and made it worth his while to ask the Spaniard in again and again.

And his stories, certainly, were worth hearing. He seemed to have been everywhere, and to have seen everything: born in Peru, and sent home to Spain at ten years old; brought up in Italy; a soldier in the

Levant; an adventurer to the East Indies; again in America, first in the islands, and then in Mexico. Then back again to Spain, and thence to Rome, and thence to Ireland. Shipwrecked; captive among savages; looking down the craters of volcanoes; hanging about all the courts of Europe; fighting Turks, Indians, lions, elephants, alligators, and what not? at five-and-thirty he had seen enough for three lives, and knew how to make the best of what he had seen.

He had shared, as a lad, in the horrors of the memorable siege of Famagusta, and had escaped, he hardly knew himself how, from the hands of the victorious Turks, and from the certainty (if he escaped being flayed alive or impaled, as most of the captive officers were) of ending his life as a Janissary at the Sultan's court. He had been at the Battle of the Three Kings; had seen Stukely borne down by a hundred lances, unconquered even in death; and had held upon his knee the head of the dying king of Portugal.

And now, as he said to Rose one evening, what had he left on earth, but a heart trampled as hard as the pavement? Whom had he to love? Who loved him? He had nothing for which to live but fame: and even that was denied to him, a prisoner in a foreign land.

"Had he no kindred, then?" asked pitying Rose.

"My two sisters are in a convent;—they had neither money nor beauty; so they are dead to me. My brother is a Jesuit, so he is dead to me. My father fell by the hands of Indians in Mexico; my

mother, a penniless widow, is companion, duenna—whatsoever they may choose to call it—carrying fans and lap-dogs for some princess or other there in Seville, of no better blood than herself; and I—devil! I have lost even my sword—and so fares the house of De Soto."

Don Guzman, of course, intended to be pitied, and pitied he was accordingly. And then he would turn the conversation, and begin telling Italian stories, after the Italian fashion, according to his auditory; the pathetic ones when Rose was present, the racy ones when she was absent; so that Rose had wept over the sorrows of Juliet and Desdemona, and over many another moving tale, long before they were ever enacted on an English stage, and the ribs of the Bideford worthies had shaken to many a jest which Cinthio and Bandello's ghosts must come and make for themselves over again if they wish them to be remembered, for I shall lend them no shove toward immortality.

And so on, and so on. What need of more words? Before a year was out, Rose Salterne was far more in love with Don Guzman than he with her; and both suspected each other's mind, though neither hinted at the truth; she from fear, and he, to tell the truth, from sheer Spanish pride of blood. For he soon began to find out that he must compromise that blood by marrying the heretic burgher's daughter, or all his labour would be thrown away.

He had seen with much astonishment, and then practised with much pleasure, that graceful old English fashion of saluting every lady on the cheek at meet-

ing, which (like the old Dutch fashion of asking young ladies out to feasts without their mothers) used to give such cause of brutal calumny and scandal to the coarse minds of Romish visitors from the Continent; and he had seen, too, fuming with jealous rage, more than one Bideford burgher, redolent of onions, profane in that way the velvet cheek of Rose Salterne.

So, one day, he offered his salute in like wise; but he did it when she was alone; for something within (perhaps a guilty conscience) whispered that it might be hardly politic to make the proffer in her father's presence: however, to his astonishment, he received a prompt though quiet rebuff.

"No, sir; you should know that my cheek is not for you."

"Why," said he, stifling his anger, "it seems free enough to every counter-jumper in the town!"

Was it love, or simple innocence, which made her answer apologetically?

"True, Don Guzman; but they are my equals."

"And I?"

"You are a nobleman, sir; and should recollect that you are one."

"Well," said he, forcing a sneer, "it is a strange taste to prefer the shopkeeper!"

"Prefer?" said she, forcing a laugh in her turn; "it is a mere form among us. They are nothing to me, I can tell you."

"And I, then, less than nothing?"

Rose turned very red; but she had nerve to answer—

"And why should you be anything to me? You have condescended too much, sir, already to us, in giving us many a—many a pleasant evening. You must condescend no further. You wrong yourself, sir, and me too. No, sir; not a step nearer!—I will not! A salute between equals means nothing: but between you and me—I vow, sir, if you do not leave me this moment, I will complain to my father."

"Do so, madam! I care as little for your father's anger, as you for my misery."

"Cruel!" cried Rose, trembling from head to foot.

"I love you, madam!" cried he, throwing himself at her feet. "I adore you! Never mention differences of rank to me more; for I have forgotten them; forgotten all but love, all but you, madam! My light, my lodestar, my princess, my goddess! You see where my pride is gone; remember I plead as a suppliant, a beggar—though one who may be one day a prince, a king! ay, and a prince now, a very Lucifer of pride to all except to you; to you a wretch who grovels at your feet, and cries, 'Have mercy on me, on my loneliness, my homelessness, my friendlessness.' Ah, Rose (madam I should have said, forgive the madness of my passion), you know not the heart which you break. Cold Northerns, you little dream how a Spaniard can love. Love? Worship, rather; as I worship you, madam; as I bless the captivity which brought me the sight of you, and the ruin which first made me rich. Is it possible, Saints and Virgin! do my own tears deceive my eyes, or are there tears, too, in those radiant orbs?"

"Go, sir!" cried poor Rose, recovering herself suddenly; "and let me never see you more." And, as a last chance for life, she darted out of the room.

"Your slave obeys you, madam, and kisses your hands and feet for ever and a day," said the cunning Spaniard, and drawing himself up, walked serenely out of the house; while she, poor fool, peeped after him out of her window up-stairs, and her heart sank within her as she watched his jaunty and careless air.

How much of that rhapsody of his was honest, how much premeditated, I cannot tell: though she, poor child, began to fancy that it was all a set speech, when she found that he had really taken her at her word, and set foot no more within her father's house. So she reproached herself for the cruelest of women; settled, that if he died, she should be his murderess; watched for him to pass at the window, in hopes that he might look up, and then hid herself in terror the moment he appeared round the corner; and so forth, and so forth:—one love-making is very like another, and has been so, I suppose, since that first blessed marriage in Paradise, when Adam and Eve made no love at all, but found it ready-made for them from heaven; and really it is fiddling while Rome is burning, to spend more pages over the sorrows of poor little Rose Salterne, while the destinies of Europe are hanging on the marriage between Elizabeth and Anjou: and Sir Humphrey Gilbert is stirring heaven and earth, and Devonshire, of course, as the most important portion of the said earth, to carry out his dormant patent, which will give to England in due

time (we are not jesting now) Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and Canada, and the Northern States; and to Humphrey Gilbert himself something better than a new world, namely another world, and a crown of glory therein which never fades away.

CHAPTER XI.

HOW EUSTACE LEIGH MET THE POPE'S LEGATE.

> "Misguided, rash, intruding fool, farewell!
> Thou see'st to be too busy is some danger."
>
> *Hamlet.*

It is the spring of 1582-3. The grey March skies are curdling hard and high above black mountain peaks. The keen March wind is sweeping harsh and dry across a dreary sheet of bog, still red and yellow with the stains of winter frost. One brown knoll alone breaks the waste, and on it a few leafless wind-clipt oaks stretch their moss-grown arms, like giant hairy spiders, above a desolate pool which crisps and shivers in the biting breeze, while from beside its brink rises a mournful cry, and sweeps down, faint and fitful, amid the howling of the wind.

Along the brink of the bog, picking their road among crumbling rocks and green spongy springs, a company of English soldiers are pushing fast, clad cap-à-pié in helmet and quilted jerkin, with arquebus on shoulder, and pikes trailing behind them; stern steadfast men, who, two years since, were working the guns at Smerwick fort, and have since then seen many a bloody fray, and shall see more before they

die. Two captains ride before them on shaggy ponies, the taller in armour, stained and rusted with many a storm and fray, the other in brilliant inlaid cuirass and helmet, gaudy sash and plume, and sword hilt glittering with gold, a quaint contrast enough to the meagre garron which carries him and his finery. Beside them, secured by a cord which a pikeman has fastened to his own wrist, trots a bare-legged Irish kerne, whose only clothing is his ragged yellow mantle, and the unkempt "glib" of hair, through which his eyes peer out, right and left, in mingled fear and sullenness. He is the guide of the company, in their hunt after the rebel Baltinglas; and woe to him if he play them false.

"A pleasant country, truly, Captain Raleigh," says the dingy officer to the gay one. "I wonder how, having once escaped from it to Whitehall, you have the courage to come back and spoil that gay suit with bog-water and mud."

"A very pleasant country, my friend Amyas; what you say in jest, I say in earnest."

"Hillo! Our tastes have changed places. I am sick of it already, as you foretold. Would Heaven that I could hear of some adventure westward ho! and find these big bones swinging in a hammock once more. Pray what has made you so suddenly in love with bog and rock, that you come back to tramp them with us? I thought you had spied out the nakedness of the land long ago."

"Bog and rock? Nakedness of the land? What is needed here but prudence and skill, justice and

law? This soil, see, is fat enough, if men were here to till it. These rocks—who knows what minerals they may hold? I hear of gold and jewels found already in divers parts; and Daniel, my brother Humphrey's German assayer, assures me that these rocks are of the very same kind as those which yield the silver in Peru. Tut, man! if her gracious Majesty would but bestow on me some few square miles of this same wilderness, in seven years' time I would make it blossom like the rose, by God's good help."

"Humph! I should be more inclined to stay here then."

"So you shall, and be my agent, if you will, to get in my mine-rents, and my corn-rents, and my fishery-rents, eh? Could you keep accounts, old knight of the bear's-paw?"

"Well enough for such short reckonings as yours would be, on the profit side at least. No, no—I'd sooner carry lime all my days from Cauldy to Bideford, than pass another twelvemonth in the land of Ire, among the children of wrath. There is a curse upon the face of the earth, I believe."

"There is no curse upon it, save the old one of man's sin—'Thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to thee.' But if you root up the thorns and thistles, Amyas, I know no fiend who can prevent your growing wheat instead; and if you till the ground like a man, you plough and harrow away nature's curse, and other fables of the schoolmen beside," added he, in that daring fashion which afterwards obtained for

him (and never did good Christian less deserve it) the imputation of Atheism.

"It is sword and bullet, I think, that are needed here, before plough and harrow, to clear away some of the curse. Until a few more of these Irish lords are gone where the Desmonds are, there is no peace for Ireland."

"Humph! not so far wrong, I fear. And yet—Irish lords? These very traitors are better English blood than we who hunt them down. When Yeo here slew the Desmond the other day, he no more let out a drop of Irish blood, than if he had slain the Lord Deputy himself."

"His blood be on his own head," said Yeo. "He looked as wild a savage as the worst of them, more shame to him; and the Ancient here had nigh cut off his arm before he told us who he was: and then, your worship, having a price upon his head, and like to bleed to death too——"

"Enough, enough, good fellow," said Raleigh. "Thou hast done what was given thee to do. Strange, Amyas, is it not? Noble Normans sunk into savages —Hibernis ipsis hiberniores! Is there some uncivilising venom in the air?"

"Some venom, at least, which makes Englishmen traitors. But the Irish themselves are well enough, if their tyrants would let them be. See now, what more faithful liegeman has her Majesty than the Inchiquin, who, they say, is Prince of Themond, and should be king of all Ireland, if every man had his right?"

"Don't talk of rights in the land of wrongs, man. But the Inchiquin knows well that the true Irish Esau has no worse enemy than his supplanter, the Norman Jacob. And yet, Amyas, are even these men worse than we might be, if we had been bred up masters over the bodies and souls of men, in some remote land where law and order had never come? Look at this Desmond, brought up a savage among savages, a Papist among Papists, a despot among slaves; a thousand easy maidens deeming it honour to serve his pleasure, a thousand wild ruffians deeming it piety to fulfil his revenge: and let him that is without sin among us cast the first stone."

"Ay," went on Raleigh to himself, as the conversation dropped. "What hadst thou been, Raleigh, hadst thou been that Desmond whose lands thou now desirest? What wilt thou be when thou hast them? Will thy children sink downwards, as these noble barons sank? Will the genius of tyranny and falsehood find soil within thy heart to grow and ripen fruit? What guarantee hast thou for doing better here than those who went before thee? And yet: cannot I do justice, and love mercy? Can I not establish plantations, build and sow, and make the desert valleys laugh with corn? Shall I not have my Spenser with me, to fill me with all noble thoughts, and raise my soul to his heroic pitch? Is not this true knight-errantry, to redeem to peace and use, and to the glory of that glorious Queen whom God has given to me, a generous soil and a more generous race? Trustful and tender-hearted they are—none

more; and if they be fickle and passionate, will not that very softness of temper, which makes them so easily led to evil, make them as easy to be led towards good? Yes—here, away from courts, among a people who should bless me as their benefactor and deliverer —what golden days might be mine! And yet—is this but another angel's mask from that same cunning fiend Ambition's stage? And will my house be indeed the house of God, the foundations of which are loyalty, and its bulwarks righteousness, and not the house of Fame, whose walls are of the soap-bubble, and its floor a sea of glass mingled with fire? I would be good and great—When will the day come when I shall be content to be good, and yet not great, like this same simple Leigh, toiling on by my side to do his duty, with no more thought for the morrow than the birds of God? Greatness? I have tasted that cup within the last twelve months; do I not know that it is sweet in the mouth, but bitter in the belly? Greatness? And was not Essex great, and John of Austria great, and Desmond great, whose race, but three short years ago, had stood for ages higher than I shall ever hope to climb—castles, and lands, and slaves by thousands, and five hundred gentlemen of his name, who had vowed to forswear God before they forswore him; and well have they kept their vow! And now, dead in a turf-hovel, like a coney in a burrow! Leigh, what noise was that?"

"An Irish howl, I fancied: but it came from off the bog; it may be only a plover's cry."

"Something not quite right, Sir Captain, to my

mind," said the Ancient. "They have ugly stories here of pucks and banshees, and what not of ghosts. There it was again, wailing just like a woman. They say the banshee cried all night before Desmond was slain."

"Perhaps, then, this one may be crying for Baltinglas; for his turn is likely to come next—not that I believe in such old wives' tales."

"Shamus, my man," said Amyas to the guide, "do you hear that cry in the bog?"

The guide put on the most stolid of faces, and answered in broken English:

"Shamus hear nought. Perhaps—what you call him?—fishing in ta pool."

"An otter, he means, and I believe he is right. Stay, no! Did you not hear it then, Shamus? It was a woman's voice."

"Shamus is shick in his ears ever since Christmas."

"Shamus will go after Desmond if he lies," said Amyas. "Ancient, we had better send a few men to see what it is; there may be a poor soul taken by robbers, or perhaps starving to death, as I have seen many a one."

"And I too, poor wretches; and by no fault of their own or ours either: but if their lords will fall to quarrelling, and then drive each other's cattle, and waste each other's lands, sir, you know——"

"I know," said Amyas, impatiently; "why dost not take the men, and go?"

"Cry you mercy, noble Captain: but—I fear nothing born of woman."

"Well, what of that?" said Amyas, with a smile.

"But these pucks, sir. The wild Irish do say that they haunt the pools; and they do no manner of harm, sir, when you are coming up to them; but when you are past, sir, they jump on your back like to apes, sir,—and who can tackle that manner of fiend?"

"Why, then, by thine own showing, Ancient," said Raleigh, "thou may'st go and see all safely enough, and then if the puck jumps on thee as thou comest back, just run in with him here, and I'll buy him of thee for a noble; or thou may'st keep him in a cage, and make money in London by showing him for a monster."

"Good heavens forefend, Captain Raleigh! but you talk rashly! But if I must, Captain Leigh:—

'Where duty calls
To brazen walls,
How base the slave who flinches.'

Lads, who'll follow me?"

"Thou askest for volunteers, as if thou wert to lead a forlorn hope. Pull away at the usquebaugh, man, and swallow Dutch courage, since thine English is oozed away. Stay; I'll go myself."

"And I with you," said Raleigh. "As the Queen's true knight-errant, I am bound to be behindhand in no adventure. Who knows but we may find a wicked magician, just going to cut off the head of some saffron-mantled princess?" and he dismounted.

"Oh, sirs, sirs, to endanger your precious——"

"Pooh," said Raleigh. "I wear an amulet, and

have a spell of art-magic at my tongue's end, whereby, Sir Ancient, neither can a ghost see me, nor I see them. Come with us, Yeo, the Desmond-slayer, and we will shame the devil, or be shamed by him."

"He may shame me, sir, but he will never frighten me:" quoth Yeo; "but the bog, Captains?"

"Tut! Devonshire men, and heath-trotters born, and not know our way over a peat-moor!"

And the three strode away.

They splashed and scrambled for some quarter of a mile to the knoll, while the cry became louder and louder as they neared.

"That's neither ghost nor otter, sirs, but a true Irish howl, as Captain Leigh said; and I'll warrant Master Shamus knew as much long ago," said Yeo.

And in fact, they could now hear plainly the "Ochone, Ochonorie," of some wild woman; and scrambling over the boulders of the knoll, in another minute came full upon her.

She was a young girl, sluttish and unkempt, of course, but fair enough; her only covering, as usual, was the ample yellow mantle. There she sat upon a stone, tearing her black dishevelled hair, and every now and then throwing up her head, and bursting into a long mournful cry, "for all the world," as Yeo said, "like a dumb four-footed hound, and not a Christian soul."

On her knees lay the head of a man of middle age, in the long soutane of a Romish priest. One look at the attitude of his limbs told them that he was dead.

The two paused in awe; and Raleigh's spirit, sus-

ceptible of all poetical images, felt keenly that strange scene,—the bleak and bitter sky, the shapeless bog, the stunted trees, the savage girl alone with the corpse in that utter desolation. And as she bent her head over the still face, and called wildly to him who heard her not, and then, utterly unmindful of the intruders, sent up again that dreary wail into the dreary air, they felt a sacred horror, which almost made them turn away, and leave her unquestioned: but Yeo, whose nerves were of tougher fibre, asked quietly,—

"Shall I go and search the fellow, Captain?"

"Better, I think," said Amyas.

Raleigh went gently to the girl, and spoke to her in English. She looked up at him, his armour and his plume, with wide and wondering eyes, and then shook her head, and returned to her lamentation.

Raleigh gently laid his hand on her arm, and lifted her up, while Yeo and Amyas bent over the corpse.

It was the body of a large and coarse-featured man: but wasted and shrunk as if by famine to a very skeleton. The hands and legs were cramped up, and the trunk bowed together, as if the man had died of cold or famine. Yeo drew back the clothes from the thin bosom, while the girl screamed and wept, but made no effort to stop him.

"Ask her who it is? Yeo, you know a little Irish," said Amyas.

He asked, but the girl made no answer. "The stubborn jade won't tell of course, sir. If she were but a man, I'd make her soon enough."

"Ask her who killed him?"

"No one, she says; and I believe she says true, for I can find no wound. The man has been starved, sirs, as I am a sinful man. God help him, though he is a priest: and yet he seems full enough down below. What's here? A big pouch, sirs, stuffed full of somewhat."

"Hand it hither."

The two opened the pouch; papers, papers, but no scrap of food. Then a parchment. They unrolled it.

"Latin," said Amyas; "you must construe, Don Scholar."

"Is it possible?" said Raleigh, after reading a moment. "This is indeed a prize! This is Saunders himself!"

Yeo sprang up from the body as if he had touched an adder. "Nick Saunders, the Legacy, sir?"

"Nicholas Saunders, the Legate."

"The villain! why did not he wait for me to have the comfort of killing him? Dog!" and he kicked the corpse with his foot.

"Quiet! quiet! Remember the poor girl," said Amyas, as she shrieked at the profanation, while Raleigh went on, half to himself. "Yes, this is Saunders. Misguided fool, and this is the end! To this thou hast come with thy plotting and thy conspiring, thy lying and thy boasting, consecrated banners and Pope's bulls, Agnus Deis and holy waters, the blessing of all saints and angels, and thy Lady of the Immaculate Conception! Thou hast called on the Heavens to judge between thee and us, and here is their answer! What is that in his hand, Amyas?

Give it me. A pastoral epistle to the Earl of Ormond, and all nobles of the realm of Ireland;' 'To all who groan beneath the loathsome tyranny of an illegitimate adulteress, etc., Nicholas Saunders, by the grace of God, Legate, etc.' Bah! and this forsooth was thy last meditation! Incorrigible pedant! Victrix causa Diis placuit, sed victa Catoni!"

He ran his eye through various other documents, written in the usual strain: full of huge promises from the Pope and the King of Spain; frantic and filthy slanders against Elizabeth, Burghley, Leicester, Essex (the elder), Sidney, and every great and good man (never mind of which party) who then upheld the commonweal; bombastic attempts to terrify weak consciences, by denouncing endless fire against those who opposed the true faith; fulsome ascriptions of martyrdom and sanctity to every rebel and traitor who had been hanged for the last twenty years; wearisome arguments about the bull In Cœna Domini, Elizabeth's excommunication, the nullity of English law, the sacred duty of rebellion, the right to kill a prince impenitently heretical, and the like insanities and villanies, which may be read at large in Camden, the Phœnix Britannicus, Fox's Martyrs, or, surest of all, in the writings of the worthies themselves.

With a gesture of disgust, Raleigh crammed the foul stuff back again into the pouch. Taking it with them, they walked back to the company, and then remounting, marched away once more towards the lands of the Desmonds; and the girl was left alone with the dead.

An hour had passed, when another Englishman was standing by the wailing girl, and round him a dozen shockheaded kernes, skene on thigh and javelin in hand, were tossing about their tawny rags, and adding their lamentations to those of the lonely watcher.

The Englishman was Eustace Leigh; a layman still, but still at his old work. By two years of intrigue and labour from one end of Ireland to the other, he had been trying to satisfy his conscience for rejecting "the higher calling" of the celibate; for mad hopes still lurked within that fiery heart. His brow was wrinkled now; his features harshened; the scar upon his face, and the slight distortion which accompanied it, was hidden by a bushy beard from all but himself; and he never forgot it for a day, nor forgot who had given it to him.

He had been with Desmond, wandering in moor and moss for many a month in danger of his life; and now he was on his way to James Fitz-Eustace, Lord Baltinglas, to bring him the news of Desmond's death; and with him a remnant of the clan, who were either too stouthearted, or too desperately stained with crime, to seek peace from the English, and, as their fellows did, find it at once and freely.

There Eustace stood, looking down on all that was left of the most sacred personage of Ireland; the man who, as he once had hoped, was to regenerate his native land, and bring the proud island of the west once more beneath that gentle yoke, in which united Christendom laboured for the commonweal of the universal church. There he was, and with him all

Eustace's dreams, in the very heart of that country which he had vowed, and believed as he vowed, was ready to rise in arms as one man, even to the baby at the breast (so he had said), in vengeance against the Saxon heretic, and sweep the hated name of Englishman into the deepest abysses of the surge which walled her coasts; with Spain and the Pope to back him, and the wealth of the Jesuits at his command; in the midst of faithful Catholics, valiant soldiers, noblemen who had pledged themselves to die for the cause, serfs who worshipped him as a demigod—starved to death in a bog! It was a pretty plain verdict on the reasonableness of his expectations; but not to Eustace Leigh.

It was a failure, of course; but it was an accident; indeed, to have been expected, in a wicked world whose prince and master, as all knew, was the devil himself; indeed, proof of the righteousness of the cause—for when had the true faith been other than persecuted and trampled under foot? If one came to think of it with eyes purified from the tears of carnal impatience, what was it but a glorious martyrdom?

"Blest Saunders!" murmured Eustace Leigh; "let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like this! Ora pro me, most excellent martyr, while I dig thy grave upon this lonely moor, to wait there for thy translation to one of those stately shrines, which, cemented by the blood of such as thee, shall hereafter rise restored toward heaven, to make this land once more 'The Isle of Saints.'"

The corpse was buried; a few prayers said hastily; and Eustace Leigh was away again, not now to find

Baltinglas; for it was more than his life was worth. The girl had told him of the English soldiers who had passed, and he knew that they would reach the earl probably before he did. The game was up; all was lost. So he retraced his steps, as a desperate resource, to the last place where he would be looked for: and after a month of disguising, hiding, and other expedients, found himself again in his native county of Devon, while Fitz-Eustace Viscount Baltinglas had taken ship for Spain, having got little by his famous argument to Ormond in behalf of his joining the Church of Rome, "Had not thine ancestor, blessed Thomas of Canterbury, died for the Church of Rome, thou hadst never been Earl of Ormond." The premises were certainly sounder than those of his party were wont to be; for it was to expiate the murder of that turbulent hero that the Ormond lands had been granted by Henry II.: but as for the conclusion therefrom, it was much on a par with the rest.

And now let us return to Raleigh and Amyas, as they jog along their weary road. They have many things to talk of; for it is but three days since they met.

Amyas, as you see, is coming fast into Raleigh's old opinion of Ireland. Raleigh, under the inspiration of a possible grant of Desmond's lands, looks on bogs and rocks transfigured by his own hopes and fancy, as if by the glory of a rainbow. He looked at all things so, noble fellow, even thirty years after, when old, worn out, and ruined; well for him had it been otherwise, and his heart had grown old with his

head! Amyas, who knows nothing about Desmond's lands, is puzzled at the change.

"Why, what is this, Raleigh? You are like children sitting in the market-place, and nothing pleases you. You wanted to get to court, and you have got there; and are lord and master, I hear, or something very like it, already—and as soon as Fortune stuffs your mouth full of sweetmeats, do you turn informer on her?"

Raleigh laughed insignificantly: but was silent.

"And how is your friend, Mr. Secretary Spenser, who was with us at Smerwick?"

"Spenser? He has thriven even as I have; and he has found, as I have, that in making one friend at court you make ten foes; but 'Oderint Dum metuant' is no more my motto than his, Leigh. I want to be great—great I am already, they say, if princes' favour can swell the frog into an ox: but I want to be liked, loved—I want to see people smile when I enter."

"So they do, I'll warrant," said Amyas.

"So do hyenas," said Raleigh; "grin because they are hungry, and I may throw them a bone; I'll throw you one now, old lad, or rather a good sirloin of beef, for the sake of your smile. That's honest, at least, I'll warrant, whosoever's else is not. Have you heard of my brother Humphrey's new project?"

"How should I hear anything in this waste howling wilderness?"

"Kiss hands to the wilderness then, and come with me to Newfoundland!"

"You to Newfoundland?"

"Yes. I to Newfoundland, unless my little matter here is settled at once. Gloriana don't know it, and shan't till I'm off. She'd send me to the Tower, I think, if she caught me playing truant. I could hardly get leave to come hither; but I must out, and try my fortune. I am over ears in debt already, and sick of courts and courtiers. Humphrey must go next spring and take possession of his kingdom beyond seas, or his patent expires; and with him I go, and you too, my circumnavigating giant.

And then Raleigh expounded to Amyas the details of the great Newfoundland scheme, which whoso will may read in the pages of Hakluyt.

Sir Humphrey Gilbert, Raleigh's half-brother, held a patent for "planting" the lands of Newfoundland and "Meta Incognita" (Labrador). He had attempted a voyage thither with Raleigh in 1578, whereof I never could find any news, save that he came back again, after a heavy brush with some Spanish ships (in which his best captain, Mr. Morgan, was killed), having done nothing, and much impaired his own estate: but now he had collected a large sum; Sir Gilbert Peckham of London, Mr. Hayes of South Devon, and various other gentlemen, of whom more hereafter, had adventured their money; and a considerable colony was to be sent out the next year, with miners, assayers, and, what was more, Parmenius Budæus, Frank's old friend, who had come to England full of thirst to see the wonders of the New World; and over and above this, as Raleigh told Amyas in strictest secrecy, Adrian Gilbert, Humphrey's brother,

was turning every stone at court for a patent of discovery in the north-west; and this Newfoundland colony, though it was to produce gold, silver, merchandise and what not, was but a basis of operations, a half-way house from whence to work out the north-west passage to the Indies—that golden dream, as fatal to English valour as the Guiana one to Spanish—and yet hardly, hardly, to be regretted, when we remember the seamanship, the science, the chivalry, the heroism, unequalled in the history of the English nation, which it has called forth among those our later Arctic voyagers, who have combined the knight-errantry of the middle age with the practical prudence of the modern, and dared for duty more than Cortez or Pizarro dared for gold.

Amyas, simple fellow, took all in greedily; he knew enough of the dangers of the Magellan passage to appreciate the boundless value of a road to the East Indies which would (as all supposed then) save half the distance, and be as it were a private possession of the English, safe from Spanish interference; and he listened reverently to Sir Humphrey's quaint proofs, half true, half fantastic, of such a passage, which Raleigh detailed to him—of the Primum Mobile, and its diurnal motion from east to west, in obedience to which the sea-current flowed westward ever round the Cape of Good Hope, and being unable to pass through the narrow strait between South America and the Antarctic continent, rushed up the American shore, as the Gulf Stream, and poured north-westward between Greenland and Labrador

towards Cathay and India; of that most crafty argument of Sir Humphrey's—how Aristotle in his book De Mundo, and Simon Gryneus in his annotations thereon, declare that the world (the Old World) is an island, compassed by that which Homer calls the river Oceanus; *ergo*, the New World is an island also, and there is a north-west passage; of the three brothers (names unknown) who had actually made the voyage, and named what was afterwards called Davis's Strait after themselves; of the Indians who were cast ashore in Germany in the reign of Frederic Barbarossa, who, as Sir Humphrey had learnedly proved per modum tollendi, could have come only by the north-west; and above all, of Salvaterra, the Spaniard, who in 1568 had told Sir Henry Sidney (Philip's father), there in Ireland, how he had spoken with a Mexican friar named Urdaneta, who had himself come from Mar del Zur (the Pacific) into Germany by that very north-west passage; at which last Amyas shook his head, and said that friars were liars, and seeing believing; "but if you must needs have an adventure, you insatiable soul you, why not try for the golden city of Manoa?"

"Manoa?" asked Raleigh, who had heard, as most had, dim rumours of the place. "What do you know of it?"

Whereon Amyas told him all that he had gathered from the Spaniard; and Raleigh, in his turn, believed every word.

"Humph!" said he after a long silence. "To find that golden Emperor; offer him help and friendship

from the Queen of England; defend him against the Spaniards; if we became strong enough, conquer back all Peru from the Popish tyrants, and reinstate him on the throne of the Incas, with ourselves for his body-guard, as the Norman Varangians were to the effeminate Emperors of Byzant—Hey, Amyas? You would make a gallant chieftain of Varangs. We'll do it, lad!"

"We'll try," said Amyas; "but we must be quick, for there's one Berreo sworn to carry out the quest to the death; and if the Spaniards once get thither, their plan of works will be much more like Pizarro's than like yours; and by the time we come, there will be neither gold nor city left."

"Nor Indians either, I'll warrant the butchers; but lad, I am promised to Humphrey; I have a bark fitting out already, and all I have, and more, adventured in her; so Manoa must wait."

"It will wait well enough, if the Spaniards prosper no better on the Amazon than they have done; but must I come with you? To tell the truth, I am quite shore-sick, and to sea I must go. What will my mother say?"

"I'll manage thy mother," said Ralcigh; and so he did; for, to cut a long story short, he went back the month after, and he not only took home letters from Amyas to his mother, but so impressed on that good lady the enormous profits and honours to be derived from Meta Incognita, and (which was most true) the advantage to any young man of sailing with such a general as Humphrey Gilbert, most pious and

most learned of seamen and of cavaliers, beloved and honoured above all his compeers by Queen Elizabeth, that she consented to Amyas's adventuring in the voyage some two hundred pounds which had come to him as his share of prize-money, after the ever memorable circumnavigation. For Mrs. Leigh, be it understood, was no longer at Burrough Court. By Frank's persuasion, she had let the old place, moved up to London with her eldest son, and taken for herself a lodging somewhere by Palace Stairs, which looked out upon the silver Thames (for Thames was silver then), with its busy ferries and gliding boats, across to the pleasant fields of Lambeth, and the Archbishop's Palace, and the wooded Surrey hills; and there she spent her peaceful days, close to her Frank and to the Court. Elizabeth would have had her re-enter it, offering her a small place in the household: but she declined, saying that she was too old and heart-weary for aught but prayer. So by prayer she lived, under the sheltering shadow of the tall minster, where she went morn and even to worship, and to entreat for the two in whom her heart was bound up; and Frank slipped in every day, if but for five minutes, and brought with him Spenser, or Raleigh, or Dyer, or Bodæus, or sometimes Sidney's self: and there was talk of high and holy things, of which none could speak better than could she; and each guest went from that hallowed room a humbler and yet a loftier man. So slipped on the peaceful months; and few and far between came Irish letters, for Ireland was then farther from Westminster than is the Black Sea

now; but those were days in which wives and mothers had learned (as they have learned once more, sweet souls!) to walk by faith and not by sight for those they love: and Mrs. Leigh was content (though when was she not content?) to hear that Amyas was winning a good report as a brave and prudent officer, sober, just and faithful, beloved and obeyed alike by English soldiers and Irish kernes.

Those two years, and the one which followed, were the happiest which she had known since her husband's death. But the cloud was fast coming up the horizon, though she saw it not. A little longer, and the sun would be hid for many a wintry day.

Amyas went to Plymouth (with Yeo, of course, at his heels), and there beheld, for the first time, the majestic countenance of the philosopher of Compton Castle. He lodged with Drake, and found him not over sanguine as to the success of the voyage.

"For learning and manners, Amyas, there's not his equal; and the Queen may well love him, and Devon be proud of him: but book-learning is not business; book-learning didn't get me round the world; book-learning didn't make Captain Hawkins, nor his father neither, the best shipbuilders from Hull to Cadiz; and book-learning, I very much fear, won't plant Newfoundland."

However, the die was cast, and the little fleet of five sail assembled in Cawsand Bay. Amyas was to go as a gentleman adventurer on board of Raleigh's bark; Raleigh himself, however, at the eleventh hour, had been forbidden by the Queen to leave England. Ere they left, Sir Humphrey Gilbert's picture was

painted by some Plymouth artist, to be sent up to Elizabeth in answer to a letter and a gift sent by Raleigh, which, as a specimen of the men and of the time, I here transcribe :—

[1] "BROTHER,—I have sent you a token from her Majesty, an anchor guided by a lady, as you see. And further, her Highness willed me to send you word, that she wisheth you as great good hap and safety to your ship as if she were there in person, desiring you to have care of yourself as of that which she tendereth; and, therefore, for her sake, you must provide for it accordingly. Furthermore, she commandeth that you leave your picture with her. For the rest I leave till our meeting, or to the report of the bearer, who would needs be the messenger of this good news. So I commit you to the will and protection of God, who send us such life and death as he shall please, or hath appointed.

"Richmond, this Friday morning,

"Your true Brother,

"W. RALEIGH."

"Who would not die, sir, for such a woman?" said Sir Humphrey (and he said truly), as he showed that letter to Amyas.

"Who would not? But she bids you rather live for her."

"I shall do both, young man; and for God too, I

[1] This letter was a few years since in the possession of Mr. Pomeroy Gilbert, fort-major at Dartmouth, a descendant of the Admiral's.

trust. We are going in God's cause; we go for the honour of God's Gospel, for the deliverance of poor infidels led captive by the devil; for the relief of my distressed countrymen unemployed within this narrow isle; and to God we commit our cause. We fight against the devil himself; and stronger is He that is within us than he that is against us."

Some say that Raleigh himself came down to Plymouth, accompanied the fleet a day's sail to sea, and would have given her Majesty the slip, and gone with them Westward-ho, but for Sir Humphrey's advice. It is likely enough: but I cannot find evidence for it. At all events, on the 11th June the fleet sailed out, having, says Mr. Hayes, "in number about 260 men, among whom we had of every faculty good choice, as shipwrights, masons, carpenters, smiths, and such like, requisite for such an action; also mineral men and refiners. Beside, for solace of our people and allurement of the savages, we were provided of musique in good variety; not omitting the least toys, as morris-dancers, hobby-horses, and May-like conceits, to delight the savage people, whom we intended to win by all fair means possible." An armament complete enough, even to that tenderness towards the Indians, which is so striking a feature of the Elizabethan seamen (called out in them, perhaps, by horror at the Spanish cruelties, as well as by their more liberal creed), and to the daily service of God on board of every ship, according to the simple old instructions of Captain John Hawkins to one of his little squadrons, "Keep good company; beware of fire; serve God daily; and

love one another"—an armament, in short, complete in all but men. The sailors had been picked up hastily and anywhere, and soon proved themselves a mutinous, and, in the case of the bark Swallow, a piratical set. The mechanics were little better. The gentlemen-adventurers, puffed up with vain hopes of finding a new Mexico, became soon disappointed and surly at the hard practical reality; while over all was the head of a sage and an enthusiast, a man too noble to suspect others, and too pure to make allowances for poor dirty human weaknesses. He had got his scheme perfect upon paper; well for him, and for his company, if he had asked Francis Drake to translate it for him into fact! As early as the second day, the seeds of failure began to sprout above ground. The men of Raleigh's bark, the Vice-Admiral, suddenly found themselves seized, or supposed themselves seized, with a contagious sickness, and at midnight forsook the fleet, and went back to Plymouth; whereto Mr. Hayes can only say, "The reason I never could understand. Sure I am that Mr. Raleigh spared no cost in setting them forth. And so I leave it unto God!"

But Amyas said more. He told Butler the Captain plainly that, if the bark went back, he would not; that he had seen enough of ships deserting their consorts; that it should never be said of him that he had followed Winter's example, and that, too, on a fair easterly wind; and finally that he had seen Doughty hanged for trying to play such a trick, and that he might see others hanged too before he died. Whereon Captain Butler offered to draw and fight, to

which Amyas showed no repugnance; whereon the captain, having taken a second look at Amyas's thews and sinews, reconsidered the matter, and offered to put Amyas on board of Sir Humphrey's Delight, if he could find a crew to row him.

Amyas looked round.

"Are there any of Sir Francis Drake's men on board?"

"Three, sir," said Yeo. "Robert Drew, and two others."

"Pelicans!" roared Amyas, "you have been round the world, and will you turn back from Westward-ho?"

There was a moment's silence, and then Drew came forward.

"Lower us a boat, captain, and lend us a caliver to make signals with, while I get my kit on deck; I'll after Captain Leigh, if I row him aboard all alone to my own hands."

"If I ever command a ship, I will not forget you," said Amyas.

"Nor us either, sir, we hope; for we haven't forgotten you and your honest conditions," said both the other Pelicans; and so away over the side went all the five, and pulled away after the admiral's lantern, firing shots at intervals as signals. Luckily for the five desperadoes, the night was all but calm. They got on board before the morning, and so away into the boundless West.[1]

[1] The Raleigh, the largest ship of the squadron, was of only 200 tons burden; The Golden Hind, Hayes' ship, which returned safe, of 40; and The Squirrel (whereof more hereafter), of 10 tons! In such cockboats did these old heroes brave the unknown seas.

CHAPTER XII.

HOW BIDEFORD BRIDGE DINED AT ANNERY HOUSE.

> "Three lords sat drinking late yestreen,
> And ere they paid the lawing,
> They set a combat them between,
> To fight it in the dawing."—*Scotch Ballad.*

EVERY one who knows Bideford cannot but know Bideford Bridge; for it is the very omphalos, cynosure, and soul, around which the town, as a body, has organised itself; and as Edinburgh is Edinburgh by virtue of its Castle, Rome Rome by virtue of its Capitol, and Egypt Egypt by virtue of its Pyramids, so is Bideford Bideford by virtue of its Bridge. But all do not know the occult powers which have advanced and animated the said wondrous bridge for now five hundred years, and made it the chief wonder, according to Prince and Fuller, of this fair land of Devon: being first an inspired bridge; a soul-saving bridge; an alms-giving bridge; an educational bridge; a sentient bridge; and last, but not least, a dinner-giving bridge. All do not know how, when it began to be built some half mile higher up, hands invisible carried the stones down-stream each night to the present site; until Sir Richard Gurney, parson of the parish, going to bed one night in sore perplexity and

fear of the evil spirit who seemed so busy in his sheepfold, beheld a vision of an angel, who bade build the bridge where he himself had so kindly transported the materials; for there alone was sure foundation amid the broad sheet of shifting sand. All do not know how Bishop Grandison of Exeter proclaimed throughout his diocese indulgences, benedictions, and "participation in all spiritual blessings for ever," to all who would promote the bridging of that dangerous ford; and so, consulting alike the interests of their souls and of their bodies, "make the best of both worlds."

All do not know, nor do I, that "though the foundation of the bridge is laid upon wool, yet it shakes at the slightest step of a horse;" or that, "though it has twenty-three arches, yet one Wm. Alford (another Milo) carried on his back for a wager four bushels salt-water measure, all the length thereof;" or that the bridge is a veritable esquire, bearing arms of its own (a ship and bridge proper on a plain field), and owning lands and tenements in many parishes, with which the said miraculous bridge has, from time to time, founded charities, built schools, waged suits at law, and finally (for this concerns us most) given yearly dinners, and kept for that purpose (luxurious and liquorous bridge that it was) the best stocked cellar of wines in all Devon.

To one of these dinners, as it happened, were invited in the year 1583, all the notabilities of Bideford, and beside them Mr St. Leger of Annery close by, brother of the Marshal of Munster, and of Lady Grenvile; a most worthy and hospitable gentleman,

who, finding riches a snare, parted with them so freely to all his neighbours as long as he lived, that he effectually prevented his children after him from falling into the temptations thereunto incident.

Between him and one of the bridge trustees arose an argument, whether a salmon caught below the bridge was better or worse than one caught above; and as that weighty question could only be decided by practical experiment, Mr. St. Leger vowed, that as the bridge had given him a good dinner, he would give the bridge one; offered a bet of five pounds that he would find them, out of the pool below Annery, as firm and flaky a salmon as the Appledore one which they had just eaten; and then, in the fulness of his heart, invited the whole company present to dine with him at Annery three days after, and bring with them each a wife or daughter; and Don Guzman being at table, he was invited too.

So there was a mighty feast in the great hall at Annery, such as had seldom been since Judge Hankford feasted Edward the Fourth there; and while every one was eating their best and drinking their worst, Rose Salterne and Don Guzman were pretending not to see each other, and watching each other all the more. But Rose, at least, had to be very careful of her glances; for not only was her father at the table, but just opposite her sat none other than Messrs. William Cary and Arthur St. Leger, Lieutenants in her Majesty's Irish army, who had returned on furlough a few days before.

Rose Salterne and the Spaniard had not exchanged

a word in the last six months, though they had met many times. The Spaniard by no means avoided her company, except in her father's house; he only took care to obey her carefully, by seeming always unconscious of her presence, beyond the stateliest of salutes at entering and departing. But he took care, at the same time, to lay himself out to the very best advantage whenever he was in her presence; to be more witty, more eloquent, more romantic, more full of wonderful tales than he ever yet had been. The cunning Don had found himself foiled in his first tactic; and he was now trying another, and a far more formidable one. In the first place, Rose deserved a very severe punishment, for having dared to refuse the love of a Spanish nobleman; and what greater punishment could he inflict than withdrawing the honour of his attentions, and the sunshine of his smiles? There was conceit enough in that notion, but there was cunning too; for none knew better than the Spaniard, that women, like the world, are pretty sure to value a man (especially if there be any real worth in him) at his own price; and that the more he demands for himself, the more they will give for him.

And now he would put a high price on himself, and pique her pride, as she was too much accustomed to worship, to be won by flattering it. He might have done that by paying attention to some one else: but he was too wise to employ so coarse a method, which might raise indignation, or disgust, or despair in Rose's heart, but would have never brought her to his feet—as it will never bring any woman worth bringing. So

he quietly and unobtrusively showed her that he could do without her; and she, poor fool, as she was meant to do, began forthwith to ask herself—why? What was the hidden treasure, what was the reserve force, which made him independent of her, while she could not say that she was independent of him? Had he a secret? how pleasant to know it! Some huge ambition? how pleasant to share in it! Some mysterious knowledge? how pleasant to learn it! Some capacity of love beyond the common? how delicious to have it all for her own! He must be greater, wiser, richer-hearted than she was, as well as better-born. Ah, if his wealth would but supply her poverty? And so, step by step, she was being led to sue in formâ pauperis to the very man whom she had spurned when he sued in like form to her. That temptation of having some mysterious private treasure, of being the priestess of some hidden sanctuary, and being able to thank heaven that she was not as other women are, was becoming fast too much for Rose, as it is too much for most. For none knew better than the Spaniard how much more fond women are, by the very law of their sex, of worshipping than of being worshipped, and of obeying than of being obeyed; how their coyness, often their scorn, is but a mask to hide their consciousness of weakness; and a mask, too, of which they themselves will often be the first to tire.

And Rose was utterly tired of that same mask as she sat at table at Annery that day; and Don Guzman saw it in her uneasy and downcast looks, and thinking (conceited coxcomb) that she must be by now suf-

ficiently punished, stole a glance at her now and then, and was not abashed when he saw that she dropped her eyes when they met his, because he saw her silence and abstraction increase, and something like a blush steal into her cheeks. So he pretended to be as much downcast and abstracted as she was, and went on with his glances, till he once found her, poor thing, looking at him to see if he was looking at her; and then he knew his prey was safe, and asked her, with his eyes, "Do you forgive me?" and saw her stop dead in her talk to her next neighbour, and falter, and drop her eyes, and raise them again after a minute in search of his, that he might repeat the pleasant question. And then what could she do but answer with all her face, and every bend of her pretty neck, "And do you forgive me in turn?"

Whereon Don Guzman broke out jubilant, like nightingale on bough, with story, and jest, and repartee; and became forthwith the soul of the whole company, and the most charming of all cavaliers. And poor Rose knew that she was the cause of his sudden change of mood, and blamed herself for what she had done, and shuddered and blushed at her own delight, and longed that the feast was over, that she might hurry home and hide herself alone with sweet fancies about a love the reality of which she felt she dared not face.

It was a beautiful sight, the great terrace at Annery that afternoon; with the smart dames in their gaudy dresses parading up and down in twos and threes before the stately house; or looking down upon the park, with the old oaks, and the deer, and the broad

land-locked river spread out like a lake beneath, all bright in the glare of the midsummer sun; or listening obsequiously to the two great ladies who did the honours, Mrs. St. Leger the hostess, and her sister-in-law, fair Lady Grenvile. All chatted, and laughed, and eyed each other's dresses, and gossiped about each other's husbands and servants: only Rose Salterne kept apart, and longed to get into a corner and laugh or cry, she knew not which.

"Our pretty Rose seems sad," said Lady Grenvile, coming up to her. "Cheer up, child! we want you to come and sing to us."

Rose answered she knew not what, and obeyed mechanically.

She took the lute, and sat down on a bench beneath the house, while the rest grouped themselves round her.

"What shall I sing?"

"Let us have your old song, 'Earl Haldan's Daughter.'"

Rose shrank from it. It was a loud and dashing ballad, which chimed in but little with her thoughts; and Frank had praised it too, in happier days long since gone by. She thought of him, and of others, and of her pride and carelessness; and the song seemed ominous to her: and yet for that very reason she dared not refuse to sing it, for fear of suspicion where no one suspected; and so she began per force—

1.

"It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
She look'd across the sea;
She look'd across the water;
And long and loud laugh'd she;

'The locks of six princesses
Must be my marriage-fee,
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Who comes a wooing me?'

2.

"It was Earl Haldan's daughter,
She walk'd along the sand;
When she was aware of a knight so fair,
Come sailing to the land.
His sails were all of velvet,
His mast of beaten gold,
And 'hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat,
Who saileth here so bold?'

3.

"'The locks of five princesses
I won beyond the sea;
I shore their golden tresses,
To fringe a cloak for thee.
One handful yet is wanting,
But one of all the tale;
So hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Furl up thy velvet sail!'

4.

"He leapt into the water,
That rover young and bold;
He gript Earl Haldan's daughter,
He shore her locks of gold;
'Go weep, go weep, proud maiden,
The tale is full to-day.
Now hey bonny boat, and ho bonny boat!
Sail Westward ho, and away!'"

As she ceased, a measured voice, with a foreign accent, thrilled through her.

"In the East, they say the nightingale sings to the rose; Devon, more happy, has nightingale and rose in one."

"We have no nightingales in Devon, Don Guzman," said Lady Grenvile; "but our little forest thrushes sing, as you hear, sweetly enough to content any ear. But what brings you away from the gentlemen so early?"

"These letters," said he, which have been just put into my hand; "and as they call me home to Spain, I was loth to lose a moment of that delightful company from which I must part so soon."

"To Spain?" asked half-a-dozen voices: for the Don was a general favourite.

"Yes, and thence to the Indies. My ransom has arrived, and with it the promise of an office. I am to be Governor of La Guayra in Caraccas. Congratulate me on my promotion."

A mist was over Rose's eyes. The Spaniard's voice was hard and flippant. Did he care for her after all? And if he did, was it nevertheless hopeless? How her cheeks glowed! Everybody must see it! Anything to turn away their attention from her, and in that nervous haste which makes people speak, and speak foolishly too, just because they ought to be silent, she asked,—

"And where is La Guayra?"

"Half round the world, on the coast of the Spanish main. The loveliest place on earth, and the loveliest governor's house, in a forest of palms at the foot of a mountain eight thousand feet high: I shall only want a wife there to be in paradise."

"I don't doubt that you may persuade some fair lady of Seville to accompany you thither," said Lady Grenvile

"Thanks, gracious Madam: but the truth is, that since I have had the bliss of knowing English ladies, I have begun to think that they are the only ones on earth worth wooing."

"A thousand thanks for the compliment; but I fear none of our free English maidens would like to submit to the guardianship of a duenna. Eh, Rose? how should you like to be kept under lock and key all day by an ugly old woman with a horn on her forehead?"

Poor Rose turned so scarlet that Lady Grenvile knew her secret on the spot, and would have tried to turn the conversation: but before she could speak, some burgher's wife blundered out a commonplace about the jealousy of Spanish husbands; and another, to make matters better, giggled out something more true then delicate about West Indian masters and fair slaves.

"Ladies," said Don Guzman, reddening, "believe me that these are but the calumnies of ignorance. If we be more jealous than other nations, it is because we love more passionately. If some of us abroad are profligate, it is because they, poor men, have no helpmate, which, like the amethyst, keeps its wearer pure. I could tell you stories, ladies, of the constancy and devotion of Spanish husbands, even in the Indies, as strange as ever romancer invented."

"Can you? Then we challenge you to give us one at least."

"I fear it would be too long, Madam."

"The longer the more pleasant, Señor. How can

we spend an hour better this afternoon, while the gentlemen within are finishing their wine?"

Story-telling, in those old times, when books (and authors also, lucky for the public) were rarer than now, was a common amusement; and as the Spaniard's accomplishments in that line were well known, all the ladies crowded round him; the servants brought chairs and benches; and Don Guzman, taking his seat in the midst, with a proud humility, at Lady Grenvile's feet, began.

"Your perfections, fair and illustrious ladies, must doubtless have heard, ere now, how Sebastian Cabota, some forty-five years ago, sailed forth with a commission from my late master, the Emperor Charles the Fifth, to discover the golden lands of Tarshish, Ophir, and Cipango; but being in want of provisions, stopped short at the mouth of that mighty South American river to which he gave the name of Rio de la Plata, and sailing up it, discovered the fair land of Paraguay. But you may not have heard how, on the bank of that river, at the mouth of the Rio Terceiro, he built a fort which men still call Cabot's Tower; nor have you, perhaps, heard of the strange tale which will ever make the tower a sacred spot to all true lovers.

"For when he returned to Spain the year after, he left in his tower a garrison of a hundred and twenty men, under the command of Nuño de Lara, Ruiz Moschera, and Sebastian da Hurtado, old friends and fellow-soldiers of my invincible grandfather Don Ferdinando da Soto; and with them a jewel, than which Spain never possessed one more precious,

Lucia Miranda, the wife of Hurtado, who, famed in the Court of the Emperor no less for her wisdom and modesty than for her unrivalled beauty, had thrown up all the pomp and ambition of a palace, to marry a poor adventurer, and to encounter with him the hardships of a voyage round the world. Mangora, the Cacique of the neighbouring Timbuez Indians (with whom Lara had contrived to establish a friendship), cast his eyes on this fair creature, and no sooner saw than he coveted; no sooner coveted than he plotted, with the devilish subtilty of a savage, to seize by force what he knew he could never gain by right. She soon found out his passion (she was wise enough —what every woman is not—to know when she is loved), and telling her husband, kept as much as she could out of her new lover's sight; while the savage pressed Hurtado to come and visit him, and to bring his lady with him. Hurtado, suspecting the snare, and yet fearing to offend the Cacique, excused himself courteously on the score of his soldier's duty; and the savage, mad with desire and disappointment, began plotting against Hurtado's life.

"So went on several weeks, till food grew scarce, and Don Hurtado and Don Ruiz Moschera, with fifty soldiers, were sent up the river on a foraging party. Mangora saw his opportunity, and leapt at it forthwith.

"The tower, ladies, as I have heard from those who have seen it, stands on a knoll at the meeting of the two rivers, while on the land side stretches a dreary marsh, covered with tall grass and bushes; a fit place

for the ambuscade of four thousand Indians, which Mangora, with devilish cunning, placed around the tower, while he himself went boldly up to it, followed by thirty men, laden with grain, fruit, game, and all the delicacies which his forests could afford.

"There, with a smiling face, he told the unsuspecting Lara his sorrow for the Spaniard's want of food; besought him to accept the provision he had brought, and was, as he had expected, invited by Lara to come in and taste the wines of Spain.

"In went he and his thirty fellow-bandits, and the feast continued, with songs and libations, far into the night, while Mangora often looked round, and at last boldly asked for the fair Miranda: but she had shut herself into her lodging, pleading illness.

"A plea, fair ladies, which little availed that hapless dame: for no sooner had the Spaniards retired to rest, leaving (by I know not what madness) Mangora and his Indians within, than they were awakened by the cry of fire, the explosion of their magazine, and the inward rush of the four thousand from the marsh outside.

"Why pain your gentle ears with details of slaughter? A few fearful minutes sufficed to exterminate my bewildered and unarmed countrymen, to bind the only survivors, Miranda (innocent cause of the whole tragedy) and four other women with their infants, and to lead them away in triumph across the forest towards the Indian town.

"Stunned by the suddenness of the evils which had passed, and still more by the thought of those

worse which were to come (as she too well foresaw), Miranda travelled all night through the forest, and was brought in triumph at day-dawn before the Indian king to receive her doom. Judge of her astonishment, when, on looking up, she saw that he was not Mangora.

"A ray of hope flashed across her, and she asked where he was.

"'He was slain last night,' said the king; 'and I, his brother Siripa, am now Cacique of the Timbuez.'

"It was true; Lara, maddened with drink, rage, and wounds, had caught up his sword, rushed into the thick of the fight, singled out the traitor, and slain him on the spot; and then, forgetting safety in revenge, had continued to plunge his sword into the corpse, heedless of the blows of the savages, till he fell pierced with a hundred wounds.

"A ray of hope, as I said, flashed across the wretched Miranda for a moment; but the next she found that she had been freed from one bandit only to be delivered to another.

"'Yes,' said the new king in broken Spanish; 'my brother played a bold stake, and lost it; but it was well worth the risk, and he showed his wisdom thereby. You cannot be his queen now: you must content yourself with being mine.'

"Miranda, desperate, answered him with every fierce taunt which she could invent against his treachery and his crime; and asked him, how he came to dream that the wife of a Christian Spaniard would condescend to become the mistress of a heathen

savage; hoping, unhappy lady, to exasperate him into killing her on the spot. But in vain; she only prolonged thereby her own misery. For, whether it was, ladies, that the novel sight of divine virtue and beauty awed (as it may have awed me ere now), where it had just before maddened; or whether some dream crossed the savage (as it may have crossed me ere now), that he could make the wisdom of a mortal angel help his ambition, as well as her beauty his happiness; or whether (which I will never believe of one of those dark children of the devil, though I can boldly assert it of myself) some spark of boldness within him made him too proud to take by force what he could not win by persuasion, certain it is, as the Indians themselves confessed afterwards, that the savage only answered her by smiles; and bidding his men unbind her, told her that she was no slave of his, and that it only lay with her to become the sovereign of him and all his vassals; assigned her a hut to herself, loaded her with savage ornaments, and for several weeks treated her with no less courtesy (so miraculous is the power of love) than if he had been a cavalier of Castile.

"Three months and more, ladies, as I have heard, passed in this misery, and every day Miranda grew more desperate of all deliverance, and saw staring her in the face, nearer and nearer, some hideous and shameful end; when one day going down with the wives of the Cacique to draw water in the river, she saw on the opposite bank a white man in a tattered Spanish dress, with a drawn sword in his hand; who

had no sooner espied her, than shrieking her name, he plunged into the stream, swam across, landed at her feet, and clasped her in his arms. It was no other, ladies, incredible as it may seem, than Don Sebastian himself, who had returned with Ruiz Moschera to the tower, and found it only a charred and bloodstained heap of ruins.

"He guessed, as by inspiration, what had passed, and whither his lady was gone; and without a thought of danger, like a true Spanish gentleman, and a true Spanish lover, darted off alone into the forest, and guided only by the inspiration of his own loyal heart, found again his treasure, and found it still unstained and his own.

"Who can describe the joy, and who again the terror, of their meeting? The Indian women had fled in fear, and for the short ten minutes that the lovers were left together, life, to be sure, was one long kiss. But what to do they knew not. To go inland was to rush into the enemy's arms. He would have swum with her across the river, and attempted it; but his strength, worn out with hunger and travel, failed him; he drew her with difficulty on shore again, and sat down by her to await their doom with prayer, the first and last resource of virtuous ladies, as weapons are of cavaliers.

"Alas for them! May no true lovers ever have to weep over joys so soon lost, after having been so hardly found! For, ere a quarter of an hour was passed, the Indian women, who had fled at his approach, returned with all the warriors of the tribe.

Don Sebastian, desperate, would fain have slain his wife and himself on the spot; but his hand sank again—and whose would not but an Indian's?—as he raised it against that fair and faithful breast; in a few minutes he was surrounded, seized from behind, disarmed, and carried in triumph into the village. And if you cannot feel for him in that misery, fair ladies, who have known no sorrow, yet I, a prisoner, can."

Don Guzman paused a moment, as if overcome by emotion; and I will not say that, as he paused, he did not look to see if Rose Salterne's eyes were on him, as indeed they were.

"Yes, I can feel with him; I can estimate, better than you, ladies, the greatness of that love which could submit to captivity; to the loss of his sword; to the loss of that honour, which, next to God and his mother, is the true Spaniard's deity. There are those who have suffered that shame at the hands of valiant gentlemen" (and again Don Guzman looked up at Rose), "and yet would have sooner died a thousand deaths; but he dared to endure it from the hands of villains, savages, heathens; for he was a true Spaniard, and therefore a true lover: but I will go on with my tale.

"This wretched pair, then, as I have been told by Ruiz Moschera himself, stood together before the Cacique. He, like a true child of the devil, comprehending in a moment who Don Sebastian was, laughed with delight at seeing his rival in his power, and bade bind him at once to a tree, and shoot him to death with arrows.

"But the poor Miranda sprang forward, and threw herself at his feet, and with piteous entreaties besought for mercy from him who knew no mercy.

"And yet love, and the sight of her beauty, and the terrible eloquence of her words, while she invoked on his head the just vengeance of Heaven, wrought even on his heart: nevertheless the pleasure of seeing her, who had so long scorned him, a suppliant at his feet, was too delicate to be speedily foregone; and not till she was all but blind with tears, and dumb with agony of pleading, did he make answer, that if she would consent to become his wife, her husband's life should be spared. She, in her haste and madness, sobbed out desperately I know not what consent. Don Sebastian, who understood, if not the language, still the meaning (so had love quickened his understanding), shrieked to her not to lose her precious soul for the sake of his worthless body; that death was nothing compared to the horror of that shame; and such other words as became a noble and valiant gentleman. She, shuddering now at her own frailty, would have recalled her promise; but Siripa kept her to it, vowing, if she disappointed him again, such a death to her husband as made her blood run cold to hear of; and the wretched woman could only escape for the present by some story, that it was not the custom of her race to celebrate nuptials till a month after the betrothment; that the anger of Heaven would be on her, unless she first performed in solitude certain religious rites; and lastly, that if he dared to lay hands on her husband, she would die so resolutely,

that every drop of water should be deep enough to drown her, every thorn sharp enough to stab her to the heart; till fearing lest by demanding too much he should lose all, and awed too, as he had been at first, by a voice and looks which seemed to be, in comparison with his own, divine, Siripa bade her go back to her hut, promising her husband life; but promising too, that if he ever found the two speaking together, even for a moment, he would pour out on them both all the cruelty of those tortures in which the devil, their father, has so perfectly instructed the Indians.

"So Don Sebastian, being stripped of his garments, and painted after the Indian fashion, was set to all mean and toilsome work, amid the buffetings and insults of the whole village. And this, ladies, he endured without a murmur, ay, took delight in enduring it, as he would have endured things worse a thousand times, only for the sake, like a true lover as he was, of being near the goddess whom he worshipped, and of seeing her now and then afar off, happy enough to be repaid even by that for all indignities.

"And yet, you who have loved may well guess, as I can, that ere a week had passed, Don Sebastian and the Lady Miranda had found means, in spite of all spiteful eyes, to speak to each other once and again; and to assure each other of their love; even to talk of escape, before the month's grace should be expired. And Miranda, whose heart was full of courage as long as she felt her husband near her, went so far as to plan a means of escape which seemed possible and hopeful.

"For the youngest wife of the Cacique, who, till Miranda's coming, had been his favourite, often talked with the captive, insulting and tormenting her in her spite and jealousy, and receiving in return only gentle and conciliatory words. And one day, when the woman had been threatening to kill her, Miranda took courage to say, 'Do you fancy that I shall not be as glad to be rid of your husband, as you to be rid of me? Why kill me needlessly, when all that you require is to get me forth of the place? Out of sight out of mind. When I am gone, your husband will soon forget me, and you will be his favourite as before.' Soon, seeing that the girl was inclined to listen, she went on to tell her of her love to Don Sebastian, entreating and abjuring her, by the love which she bore the Cacique, to pity and help her; and so won upon the girl, that she consented to be privy to Miranda's escape, and even offered to give her an opportunity of speaking to her husband about it; and at last was so won over by Miranda, that she consented to keep all intruders out of the way, while Don Sebastian that very night visited Miranda in her hut.

"The hapless husband, thirsting for his love, was in that hut, be sure, the moment that kind darkness covered his steps;—and what cheer these two made of each other, when they once found themselves together, lovers must fancy for themselves: but so it was, that after many a leave-taking, there was no departure; and when the night was well-nigh past, Sebastian and Miranda were still talking together, as

if they had never met before, and would never meet again.

"But it befell, ladies (would that I was not speaking truth, but inventing, that I might have invented something merrier for your ears), it befell that very night, that the young wife of the Cacique, whose heart was lifted up with the thought that her rival was now at last disposed of, tried all her wiles to win back her faithless husband; but in vain. He only answered her caresses by indifference, then by contempt, then insults, then blows (for with the Indians, woman is always a slave, or rather a beast of burden), and went on to draw such cruel comparisons between her dark skin and the glorious fairness of the Spanish lady, that the wretched girl, beside herself with rage, burst out at last with her own secret. 'Fool that you are to madden yourself about a stranger who prizes one hair of her Spanish husband's head more than your whole body! Much does your new bride care for you! She is at this moment in her husband's arms!'

"The Cacique screamed furiously to know what she meant; and she, her jealousy and hate of the guiltless lady boiling over once for all, bade him, if he doubted her, go see for himself.

"What use of many words? They were taken. Love, or rather lust, repelled, turned in a moment into devilish hate; and the Cacique, summoning his Indians, bade them bind the wretched Don Sebastian to a tree, and there inflicted on him the lingering death to which he had at first been doomed. For

Miranda he had more exquisite cruelty in store. And shall I tell it? Yes, ladies, for the honour of love and of Spain, and for a justification of those cruelties against the Indians which are so falsely imputed to our most Christian nation, it shall be told: he delivered the wretched lady over to the tender mercies of his wives; and what they were, is neither fit for me to tell, nor you to hear.

"The two wretched lovers cast themselves upon each other's necks; drank each other's salt tears with the last kisses; accused themselves as the cause of each other's death; and then, rising above fear and grief, broke out into triumph at thus dying for and with each other; and proclaiming themselves the martyrs of love, commended their souls to God, and then stepped joyfully and proudly to their doom."

"And what was that?" asked half-a-dozen trembling voices.

"Don Sebastian, as I have said, was shot to death with arrows; but as for the lady Miranda, the wretches themselves confessed afterwards, when they received due vengeance for their crimes (as they did receive it), that after all shameful and horrible indignities, she was bound to a tree, and there burned slowly in her husband's sight, stifling her shrieks lest they should wring his heart by one additional pang, and never taking her eyes, to the last, off that beloved face. And so died (but not unavenged) Sebastian de Hurtado and Lucia Miranda,—a Spanish husband and a Spanish wife."

The Don paused, and the ladies were silent awhile;

for, indeed, there was many a gentle tear to be dried; but at last Mrs. St. Leger spoke, half, it seemed, to turn off the too painful impression of the over-true tale, the outlines whereof may be still read in old Charlevoix.

"You have told a sad and a noble tale, sir, and told it well; but, though your story was to set forth a perfect husband, it has ended rather by setting forth a perfect wife."

"And if I have forgotten, Madam, in praising her to praise him also, have I not done that which would have best pleased his heroical and chivalrous spirit? He, be sure, would have forgotten his own virtue in the light of hers; and he would have wished me, I doubt not, to do the same also. And beside, Madam, where ladies are the theme, who has time or heart to cast one thought upon their slaves?" And the Don made one of his deliberate and highly-finished bows.

"Don Guzman is courtier enough, as far as compliments go," said one of the young ladies; "but it was hardly courtierlike of him to find us so sad an entertainment, upon a merry evening."

"Yes," said another; "we must ask him for no more stories."

"Or songs either," said a third. "I fear he knows none but about forsaken maidens and despairing lovers."

"I know nothing at all about forsaken ladies, Madam; because ladies are never forsaken in Spain."

"Nor about lovers despairing there, I suppose?"

"That good opinion of ourselves, Madam, with

which you English are pleased to twit us now and then, always prevents so sad a state of mind. For myself, I have had little to do with love; but I have had still less to do with despair, and intend, by help of Heaven, to have less."

"You are valiant, sir."

"You would not have me a coward, Madam?" and so forth.

Now all this time Don Guzman had been talking at Rose Salterne, and giving her the very slightest hint, every now and then, that he was talking at her; till the poor girl's face was almost crimson with pleasure, and she gave herself up to the spell. He loved her still; perhaps he knew that she loved him: he must know some day. She felt now that there was no escape; she was almost glad to think that there was none.

The dark, handsome, stately face; the melodious voice, with its rich Spanish accent; the quiet grace of the gestures; the wild pathos of the story; even the measured and inflated style, as of one speaking of another and a loftier world; the chivalrous respect and admiration for woman, and for faithfulness to woman—what a man he was! If he had been pleasant heretofore, he was now enchanting. All the ladies round felt that, she could see, as much as she herself did; no, not quite as much, she hoped. She surely understood him, and felt for his loneliness more than any of them. Had she not been feeling for it through long and sad months? But it was she whom he was thinking of, she whom he was speaking to, all

along. Oh, why had the tale ended so soon? She would gladly have sat and wept her eyes out till midnight over one melodious misery after another; but she was quite wise enough to keep her secret to herself; and sat behind the rest, with greedy eyes and demure lips, full of strange and new happiness—or misery; she knew not which to call it.

In the meanwhile, as it was ordained, Cary could see and hear through the window of the hall a good deal of what was going on.

"How that Spanish crocodile ogles the Rose!" whispered he to young St. Leger.

"What wonder? He is not the first by many a one."

"Ay—but—By heaven, she is making side-shots at him with those languishing eyes of hers, the little baggage!"

"What wonder? He is not the first, say I, and won't be the last. Pass the wine, man."

"I have had enough; between sack and singing, my head is as mazed as a dizzy sheep. Let me slip out."

"Not yet, man; remember you are bound for one song more."

So Cary, against his will, sat and sang another song; and in the meanwhile the party had broken up, and wandered away by twos and threes, among trim gardens and pleasaunces, and clipped yew-walks—

> "Where west-winds with musky wing
> About the cedarn alleys fling
> Narn and cassia's balmy smells——"

admiring the beauty of that stately place, long since passed into other hands, and fallen to decay; but then (if old Prince speaks true) one of the noblest mansions of the west.

At last Cary got away and out; sober, but just enough flushed with wine to be ready for any quarrel; and luckily for him, had not gone twenty yards along the great terrace before he met Lady Grenvile.

"Has your Ladyship seen Don Guzman?"

"Yes—why, where is he? He was with me not ten minutes ago. You know he is going back to Spain."

"Going! Has his ransom come?"

"Yes, and with it a governorship in the Indies."

"Governorship? Much good may it do the governed."

"Why not, then? He is surely a most gallant gentleman."

"Gallant enough—yes," said Cary, carelessly. "I must find him, and congratulate him on his honours."

"I will help you to find him," said Lady Grenvile, whose woman's eye and ear had already suspected something. "Escort me, sir."

"It is but too great an honour to squire the Queen of Bideford," said Cary, offering his hand.

"If I am your queen, sir, I must be obeyed," answered she in a meaning tone. Cary took the hint, and went on chattering cheerfully enough.

But Don Guzman was not to be found in garden or in pleasaunce.

"Perhaps," at last said a burgher's wife, with a

toss of her head, "your Ladyship may meet with him at Hankford's oak."

"At Hankford's oak? what should take him there?"

"Pleasant company, I reckon" (with another toss). "I heard him and Mistress Salterne talking about the oak just now."

Cary turned pale and drew in his breath.

"Very likely," said Lady Grenvile, quietly. "Will you walk with me so far, Mr. Cary?"

"To the world's end, if your Ladyship condescends so far." And off they went, Lady Grenvile wishing that they were going anywhere else, but afraid to let Cary go alone; and suspecting, too, that some one or other ought to go.

So they went down past the herds of deer, by a trim-kept path into the lonely dell where stood the fatal oak; and, as they went, Lady Grenvile, to avoid more unpleasant talk, poured into Cary's unheeding ears the story (which he probably had heard fifty times before) how old Chief-justice Hankford (whom some contradictory myths make the man who committed Prince Henry to prison for striking him on the bench), weary of life and sickened at the horrors and desolations of the wars of the Roses, went down to his house at Annery there, and bade his keeper shoot any man who, passing through the deer-park at night, should refuse to stand when challenged; and then going down into that glen himself, and hiding himself beneath that oak, met willingly by his keeper's hand the death which his own dared not inflict: but ere the story was half done, Cary grasped Lady Gren-

vile's hand so tightly that she gave a little shriek of pain.

"There they are!" whispered he, heedless of her; and pointed to the oak, where, half hidden by the tall fern, stood Rose and the Spaniard.

Her head was on his bosom. She seemed sobbing, trembling; he talking earnestly and passionately; but Lady Grenvile's little shriek made them both look up. To turn and try to escape was to confess all; and the two, collecting themselves instantly, walked towards her, Rose wishing herself fathoms deep beneath the earth.

"Mind, sir," whispered Lady Grenvile as they came up; "you have seen nothing."

"Madam?"

"If you are not on my ground, you are on my brother's. Obey me!"

Cary bit his lip, and bowed courteously to the Don.

"I have to congratulate you, I hear, Señor, on your approaching departure."

"I kiss your hands, Señor, in return: but I question whether it be a matter of congratulation, considering all that I leave behind."

"So do I," answered Cary, bluntly enough, and the four walked back to the house, Lady Grenvile taking everything for granted with the most charming good humour, and chatting to her three silent companions till they gained the terrace once more, and found four or five of the gentlemen, with Sir Richard at their head, proceeding to the bowling-green.

Lady Grenvile, in an agony of fear about the

quarrel which she knew must come, would have gladly whispered five words to her husband: but she dared not do it before the Spaniard, and dreaded too a faint or a scream from the Rose, whose father was of the party. So she walked on with her fair prisoner, commanding Cary to escort them in, and the Spaniard to go to the bowling-green.

Cary obeyed: but he gave her the slip the moment she was inside the door, and then darted off to the gentlemen.

His heart was on fire: all his old passion for the Rose had flashed up again at the sight of her with a lover;—and that lover a Spaniard! He would cut his throat for him, if steel could do it! Only he recollected that Salterne was there, and shrank from exposing Rose; and shrank too, as every gentleman should, from making a public quarrel in another man's house. Never mind. Where there was a will there was a way. He could get him into a corner, and quarrel with him privately about the cut of his beard, or the colour of his ribbon. So in he went; and, luckily or unluckily, found standing together apart from the rest, Sir Richard, the Don, and young St. Leger.

"Well, Don Guzman, you have given us wine-bibbers the slip this afternoon. I hope you have been well employed in the meanwhile?"

"Delightfully to myself, Señor," said the Don, who, enraged at being interrupted, if not discovered, was as ready to fight as Cary, but disliked of course an explosion as much as he did; "and to others, I doubt not."

"So the ladies say," quoth St. Leger. "He has been making them all cry with one of his stories, and robbing us meanwhile of the pleasure we had hoped for from some of his Spanish songs."

"The devil take Spanish songs!" said Cary, in a low voice, but loud enough for the Spaniard. Don Guzman clapt his hand on his sword-hilt instantly.

"Lieutenant Cary," said Sir Richard in a stern voice; "the wine has surely made you forget yourself!"

"As sober as yourself, most worshipful knight; but if you want a Spanish song, here's one; and a very scurvy one it is, like its subject—

"Don Desperado
Walked on the Prado,
And there he met his enemy.
He pulled out a knife, a,
And let out his life, a,
And fled for his own across the sea."

And he bowed low to the Spaniard.

The insult was too gross to require any spluttering.

"Señor Cary, we meet?"

"I thank your quick apprehension, Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto. When, where, and with what weapons?"

"For God's sake, gentlemen! Nephew Arthur, Cary is your guest; do you know the meaning of this?"

St. Leger was silent. Cary answered for him.

"An old Irish quarrel, I assure you, sir. A matter of years' standing. In unlacing the Señor's helmet,

the evening that he was taken prisoner, I was unlucky enough to twitch his mustachios. You recollect the fact, of course, Señor?"

"Perfectly," said the Spaniard; and then, half-amused and half-pleased, in spite of his bitter wrath, at Cary's quickness and delicacy in shielding Rose, he bowed, and——

"And it gives me much pleasure to find that he whom I trust to have the pleasure of killing to-morrow morning, is a gentleman whose nice sense of honour renders him thoroughly worthy of the sword of a De Soto."

Cary bowed in return, while Sir Richard, who saw plainly enough that the excuse was feigned, shrugged his shoulders.

"What weapons, Señor?" asked Will again.

"I should have preferred a horse and pistols," said Don Guzman after a moment, half to himself, and in Spanish; "they make surer work of it than bodkins;" but (with a sigh and one of his smiles) "beggars must not be choosers."

"The best horse in my stable is at your service, Señor," said Sir Richard Grenvile instantly.

"And in mine also, Señor," said Cary; "and I shall be happy to allow you a week to train him, if he does not answer at first to a Spanish hand."

"You forget in your courtesy, gentle sir, that the insult being with me, the time lies with me also. We wipe it off to-morrow morning with simple rapiers and daggers. Who is your second?"

"Mr. Arthur St. Leger here, Señor: who is yours?"

The Spaniard felt himself alone in the world for one moment; and then answered with another of his smiles,

"Your nation possesses the soul of honour. He who fights an Englishman needs no second."

"And he who fights among Englishmen will always find one," said Sir Richard. "I am the fittest second for my guest."

"You only add one more obligation, illustrious cavalier, to a two-years' prodigality of favours, which I shall never be able to repay."

"But, Nephew Arthur," said Grenvile, "you cannot surely be second against your father's guest, and your own uncle."

"I cannot help it, sir; I am bound by an oath, as Will can tell you. I suppose you won't think it necessary to let me blood?"

"You half deserve it, sirrah!" said Sir Richard, who was very angry: but the Don interposed quickly.

"Heaven forbid, Señors! We are no French duellists, who are mad enough to make four or six lives answer for the sins of two. This gentleman and I have quarrel enough between us, I suspect, to make a right bloody encounter."

"The dependence is good enough, sir," said Cary, licking his sinful lips at the thought. "Very well. Rapiers and shirts at three to-morrow morning—Is that the bill of fare? Ask Sir Richard where, Atty? It is against punctilio now for me to speak to him till after I am killed."

"On the sands opposite. The tide will be out at

three. And now, gallant gentlemen, let us join the bowlers."

And so they went back and spent a merry evening, all except poor Rose, who, ere she went back, had poured all her sorrows into Lady Grenvile's ear. For the kind woman, knowing that she was motherless and guileless, carried her off into Mrs. St. Leger's chamber, and there entreated her to tell the truth, and heaped her with pity, but with no comfort. For, indeed, what comfort was there to give?

. . . . .

Three o'clock, upon a still pure bright Midsummer morning. A broad and yellow sheet of ribbed tide-sands, through which the shallow river wanders from one hill-foot to the other, whispering round dark knolls of rock, and under low tree-fringed cliffs, and banks of golden broom. A mile below, the long bridge and the white walled town, all sleeping pearly in the soft haze, beneath a cloudless vault of blue. The white glare of dawn, which last night hung high in the north-west, has travelled now to the north-east, and above the wooded wall of the hills the sky is flushing with rose and amber.

A long line of gulls goes wailing up inland; the rooks from Annery come cawing and sporting round the corner at Land-cross, while high above them four or five herons flap solemnly along to find their breakfast on the shallows. The pheasants and partridges are clucking merrily in the long wet grass; every copse and hedgerow rings with the voice of birds: but the lark, who has been singing since midnight in the

"blank height of the dark," suddenly hushes his carol and drops headlong among the corn, as a broad-winged buzzard swings from some wooded peak into the abyss of the valley, and hangs high-poised above the heaven-ward songster. The air is full of perfume; sweet clover, new mown hay, the fragrant breath of kine, the dainty scent of sea-weed wreaths and fresh wet sand. Glorious day, glorious place, "bridal of earth and sky," decked well with bridal garlands, bridal perfumes, bridal songs,—What do those four cloaked figures there by the river brink, a dark spot on the fair face of the summer morn?

Yet one is as cheerful as if he too, like all nature round him, were going to a wedding; and that is Will Cary. He has been bathing down below, to cool his brain and steady his hand; and he intends to stop Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto's wooing for ever and a day. The Spaniard is in a very different mood; fierce and haggard, he is pacing up and down the sand. He intends to kill Will Cary; but then? Will he be the nearer to Rose by doing so? Can he stay in Bideford? Will she go with him? Shall he stoop to stain his family by marrying a burgher's daughter? It is a confused, all but desperate business; and Don Guzman is certain but of one thing, that he is madly in love with this fair witch, and that if she refuse him, then, rather than see her accept another man, he would kill her with his own hands.

Sir Richard Grenvile too is in no very pleasant humour, as St. Leger soon discovers, when the two seconds begin whispering over their arrangements.

"We cannot have either of them killed, Arthur."

"Mr. Cary swears he will kill the Spaniard, sir."

"He shan't. The Spaniard is my guest. I am answerable for him to Leigh, and for his ransom too. And how can Leigh accept the ransom if the man is not given up safe and sound? They won't pay for a dead carcass, boy! The man's life is worth two hundred pounds."

"A very bad bargain, sir, for those who pay the said two hundred for the rascal; but what if he kills Cary?"

"Worse still. Cary must not be killed. I am very angry with him, but he is too good a lad to be lost; and his father would never forgive us. We must strike up their swords at the first scratch."

"It will make them very mad, sir."

"Hang them! let them fight us then, if they don't like our counsel. It must be, Arthur."

"Be sure, sir," said Arthur, "that whatsoever you shall command, I shall perform. It is only too great an honour to a young man as I am, to find myself in the same duel with your worship, and to have the advantage of your wisdom and experience."

Sir Richard smiles, and says—"Now, gentlemen! are you ready?"

The Spaniard pulls out a little crucifix, and kisses it devoutly, smiting on his breast; crosses himself two or three times, and says—"Most willingly, Señor."

Cary kisses no crucifix, but says a prayer nevertheless.

Cloaks and doublets are tossed off, the men placed,

the rapiers measured hilt and point; Sir Richard and St. Leger place themselves right and left of the combatants, facing each other, the points of their drawn swords on the sand. Cary and the Spaniard stand for a moment quite upright, their sword-arms stretched straight before them, holding the long rapier horizontally, the left hand clutching the dagger close to their breasts. So they stand eye to eye, with clenched teeth and pale crushed lips, while men might count a score; St. Leger can hear the beating of his own heart; Sir Richard is praying inwardly that no life may be lost. Suddenly there is a quick turn of Cary's wrist, and a leap forward. The Spaniard's dagger flashes, and the rapier is turned aside; Cary springs six feet back as the Spaniard rushes on him in turn. Parry, thrust, parry—the steel rattles, the sparks fly, the men breathe fierce and loud; the devil's game is begun in earnest.

Five minutes have the two had instant death a short six inches off from those wild sinful hearts of theirs, and not a scratch has been given. Yes! the Spaniard's rapier passes under Cary's left arm; he bleeds.

"A hit! a hit! Strike up, Atty!" and the swords are struck up instantly.

Cary, nettled by the smart, tries to close with his foe, but the seconds cross their swords before him.

"It is enough, gentlemen. Don Guzman's honour is satisfied!"

"But not my revenge, Señor," says the Spaniard, with a frown. "This duel is *à l'outrance*, on my part; and, I believe, on Mr. Cary's also."

"By heaven it is!" says Will, trying to push past. "Let me go, Arthur St. Leger; one of us must down. Let me go, I say!"

"If you stir, Mr. Cary, you have to do with Richard Grenvile!" thunders the lion voice. I am angry enough with you for having brought on this duel at all. Don't provoke me still further, young hot-head!"

Cary stops sulkily.

"You do not know all, Sir Richard, or you would not speak in this way."

"I do, sir, all: and I shall have the honour of talking it over with Don Guzman myself."

"Hey?" said the Spaniard. "You came here as my second, Sir Richard, as I understood: but not as my counsellor."

"Arthur, take your man away! Cary! obey me as you would your father, sir! Can you not trust Richard Grenvile?"

"Come away, for God's sake!" says poor Arthur, dragging Cary's sword from him; "Sir Richard must know best!"

So Cary is led off sulking, and Sir Richard turns to the Spaniard,

"And now, Don Guzman, allow me, though much against my will, to speak to you as a friend to a friend. You will pardon me if I say that I cannot but have seen last night's devotion to——"

"You will be pleased, Señor, not to mention the name of any lady to whom I may have shown devotion. I am not accustomed to have my little affairs talked over by any unbidden counsellors."

"Well, Señor, if you take offence, you take that which is not given. Only I warn you, with all apologies for any seeming forwardness, that the quest on which you seem to be, is one on which you will not be allowed to proceed."

"And who will stop me?" asked the Spaniard, with a fierce oath.

"You are not aware, illustrious Señor," said Sir Richard, parrying the question, "that our English laity look upon mixed marriages with full as much dislike as your own ecclesiastics."

"Marriage, sir? Who gave you leave to mention that word to me?"

Sir Richard's brow darkened; the Spaniard, in his insane pride, had forced upon the good knight a suspicion which was not really just.

"Is it possible, then, Señor Don Guzman, that I am to have the shame of mentioning a baser word?"

"Mention what you will, sir. All words are the same to me; for, just or unjust, I shall answer them alike only by my sword."

"You will do no such thing, sir. You forget that I am your host."

"And do you suppose that you have therefore a right to insult me? Stand on your guard, sir!"

Grenvile answered by slapping his own rapier home into the sheath with a quiet smile.

"Señor Don Guzman must be well enough aware of who Richard Grenvile is, to know that he may claim the right of refusing duel to any man, if he shall so think fit."

"Sir!" cried the Spaniard with an oath, "this is too much! Do you dare to hint that I am unworthy of your sword? Know, insolent Englishman, I am not merely a De Soto,—though that, by St. James, were enough for you or any man. I am a Sotomayor, a Mendoza, a Bovadilla, a Losada, a——sir! I have blood royal in my veins, and you dare to refuse my challenge?"

"Richard Grenvile can show quarterings, probably, against even Don Guzman Maria Magdalena Sotomayor de Soto, or against (with no offence to the unquestioned nobility of your pedigree) the bluest blood of Spain. But he can show, moreover, thank God, a reputation which raises him as much above the imputation of cowardice, as it does above that of discourtesy. If you think fit, Señor, to forget what you have just, in very excusable anger, vented, and to return with me, you will find me still, as ever, your most faithful servant and host. If otherwise, you have only to name whither you wish your mails to be sent, and I shall, with unfeigned sorrow, obey your commands concerning them."

The Spaniard bowed stiffly, answered, "To the nearest tavern, Señor," and then strode away. His baggage was sent thither. He took a boat down to Appledore that very afternoon, and vanished, none knew whither. A very courteous note to Lady Grenvile, enclosing the jewel which he had been used to wear round his neck, was the only memorial he left behind him: except, indeed, the scar on Cary's arm, and poor Rose's broken heart.

Now county towns are scandalous places at best; and though all parties tried to keep the duel secret, yet, of course, before noon all Bideford knew what had happened, and a great deal more; and what was even worse, Rose, in an agony of terror, had seen Sir Richard Grenvile enter her father's private room, and sit there closeted with him for an hour and more; and when he went, upstairs came old Salterne, with his stick in his hand, and after rating her soundly for far worse than a flirt, gave her (I am sorry to have to say it, but such was the mild fashion of paternal rule in those times, even over such daughters as Lady Jane Grey, if Roger Ascham is to be believed) such a beating that her poor sides were black and blue for many a day; and then putting her on a pillion behind him, carried her off twenty miles to her old prison at Stow Mill, commanding her aunt to tame down her saucy blood with bread of affliction and water of affliction. Which commands were willingly enough fulfilled by the old dame, who had always borne a grudge against Rose for being rich while she was poor, and pretty while her daughter was plain; so that between flouts, and sneers, and watchings, and pretty open hints that she was a disgrace to her family, and no better than she should be, the poor innocent child watered her couch with her tears for a fortnight or more, stretching out her hands to the wide Atlantic, and calling wildly to Don Guzman to return and take her where he would, and she would live for him and die for him; and perhaps she did not call in vain.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW THE GOLDEN HIND CAME HOME AGAIN.

"The spirits of your fathers
Shall start from every wave;
For the deck it was their field of fame,
And ocean was their grave."

CAMPBELL.

"So you see, my dear Mrs. Hawkins, having the silver, as your own eyes show you, beside the ores of lead, manganese, and copper, and above all this gossan (as the Cornish call it), which I suspect to be not merely the matrix of the ore, but also the very crude form and *materia prima* of all metals—you mark me? —If my recipes, which I had from Doctor Dee, succeed only half so well as I expect, then I refine out the Luna, the silver, lay it by, and transmute the remaining ores into Sol, gold. Whereupon Peru and Mexico become superfluities, and England the mistress of the globe. Strange, no doubt; distant, no doubt: but possible, my dear madam, possible!"

"And what good to you if it be, Mr. Gilbert? If you could find a philosopher's stone to turn sinners into saints, now:—but nought save God's grace can do that: and that last seems ofttimes over long in coming." And Mrs. Hawkins sighed.

"But indeed, my dear madam, conceive now.—The Comb Martin mine thus becomes a gold mine, perhaps inexhaustible; yields me wherewithal to carry out my north-west patent; meanwhile my brother Humphrey holds Newfoundland, and builds me fresh ships year by year (for the forests of pine are boundless) for my China voyage."

"Sir Humphrey has better thoughts in his dear heart than gold, Mr. Adrian; a very close and gracious walker he has been this seven year. I wish my Captain John were so too."

"And how do you know I have nought better in my mind's eye than gold? Or, indeed, what better could I have? Is not gold the Spaniard's strength—the very mainspring of Antichrist? By gold only, therefore, can we out-wrestle him. You shake your head: but say, dear Madam (for gold England must have), which is better, to make gold bloodlessly at home, or take it bloodily abroad?"

"Oh, Mr. Gilbert, Mr. Gilbert! is it not written, that those who make haste to be rich, pierce themselves through with many sorrows? Oh, Mr. Gilbert! God's blessing is not on it all."

"Not on you, madam? Be sure that brave Captain John Hawkins's star told me a different tale, when I cast his nativity for him.—Born under stormy planets, truly: but under right royal and fortunate ones."

"Ah, Mr. Adrian! I am a simple body, and you a great philosopher: but I hold there is no star for the seaman like the star of Bethlehem; and that goes with 'peace on earth and good will to men,' and not

with such arms as that, Mr. Adrian. I can't abide to look upon them."

And she pointed up to one of the bosses of the ribbed oak-roof, on which was emblazoned the fatal crest which Clarencieux Hervey had granted years before to her husband, the "Demi-Moor proper, bound."

"Ah, Mr. Gilbert! since first he went to Guinea after those poor negroes, little lightness has my heart known; and the very day that that crest was put up in our grand new house, as the parson read the first lesson, there was this text in it, Mr. Gilbert, 'Woe to him that buildeth his house by iniquity, and his chambers by wrong. Shalt thou live because thou closest thyself in cedar?' And it went into my ears like fire, Mr. Gilbert, and into my heart like lead: and when the parson went on, 'Did not thy father eat and drink, and do judgment and justice? Then it was well with him,' I thought of good old Captain Will; and—I tell you, Mr. Gilbert, those negroes are on my soul from morning until night! We are all mighty grand now, and money comes in fast: but the Lord will require the blood of them at our hands yet, He will!"

"My dearest madam, who can prosper more than you? If your husband copied the Dons too closely once or twice in the matter of those negroes (which I do not deny), was he not punished at once when he lost ships, men, all but life, at St. Juan d'Ulloa?"

"Ay, yes," she said; "and that did give me a bit of comfort, especially when the Queen, God save her

tender heart! was so sharp with him for pity of the poor wretches: but it has not mended him. He is growing fast like the rest now, Mr. Gilbert, greedy to win, and niggardly to spend (God forgive him!) and always fretting and plotting for some new gain, and envying and grudging at Drake, and all who are deeper in the snare of prosperity than he is. Gold, gold, nothing but gold in every mouth—there it is! Ah! I mind when Plymouth was a quiet little God-fearing place as God could smile upon: but ever since my John, and Sir Francis, and poor Mr. Oxenham found out the way to the Indies, it's been a sad place. Not a sailor's wife, but is crying 'Give, give,' like the daughters of the horse-leech; and every woman must drive her husband out across seas to bring her home money to squander on hoods and farthingales, and go mincing with outstretched necks, and wanton eyes; and they will soon learn to do worse than that, for the sake of gain. But the Lord's hand will be against their tires and crisping-pins, their mufflers and farthingales, as it was against the Jews of old. Ah, dear me!"

The two interlocutors in this dialogue were sitting in a low oak-panelled room in Plymouth town, handsomely enough furnished, adorned with carving and gilding and coats of arms, and noteworthy for many strange knicknacks, Spanish gold and silver vessels on the sideboard; strange birds and skins, and charts and rough drawings of coast which hung about the room; while over the fireplace, above the portrait of old Captain Will Hawkins, pet of Henry the Eighth, hung

the Spanish ensign which Captain John had taken in fair fight at Rio de la Hacha fifteen years before, when, with two hundred men, he seized the town in despite of ten hundred Spanish soldiers, and watered his ship triumphantly at the enemy's wells.

The gentleman was a tall fair man, with a broad and lofty forehead, wrinkled with study, and eyes weakened by long poring over the crucible and the furnace.

The lady had once been comely enough: but she was aged and worn, as sailors' wives are apt to be, by many sorrows. Many a sad day had she had already; for although John Hawkins, port-admiral of Plymouth, and Patriarch of British shipbuilders, was a faithful husband enough, and as ready to forgive as he was to quarrel, yet he was obstinate and ruthless, and in spite of his religiosity (for all men were religious then) was by no means a "consistent walker."

And sadder days were in store for her, poor soul. Nine years hence she would be asked to name her son's brave new ship, and would christen it The Repentance, giving no reason, in her quiet steadfast way (so says her son Sir Richard) but that "Repentance was the best ship in which we could sail to the harbour of heaven;" and she would hear that Queen Elizabeth, complaining of the name for an unlucky one, had re-christened her The Dainty, not without some by-quip, perhaps, at the character of her most dainty captain, Richard Hawkins, the complete seaman and Euphuist afloat, of whom, perhaps, more hereafter.

With sad eyes Mrs. (then Lady) Hawkins would

see that gallant bark sail Westward-ho, to go the world around, as many another ship sailed; and then wait, as many a mother beside had waited, for the sail which never returned; till dim and uncertain, came tidings of her boy fighting for four days three great Armadas (for the coxcomb had his father's heart in him after all), a prisoner, wounded, ruined, languishing for weary years in Spanish prisons. And a sadder day than that was in store, when a gallant fleet should round the Ram Head, not with drum and trumpet, but with solemn minute guns, and all flags half-mast high, to tell her that her terrible husband's work was done, his terrible heart broken by failure and fatigue, and his body laid by Drake's, beneath the far off tropic seas.

And if, at the close of her eventful life, one gleam of sunshine opened for a while, when her boy Richard returned to her bosom from his Spanish prison, to be knighted for his valour, and made a Privy Councillor for his wisdom; yet soon, how soon, was the old cloud to close in again above her, until her weary eyes should open in the light of Paradise. For that son dropped dead, some say at the very council-table, leaving behind him nought but broken fortunes, and huge purposes which never were fulfilled; and the stormy star of that bold race was set for ever. and Lady Hawkins bowed her weary head and died, the groan of those stolen negroes ringing in her ears, having lived long enough to see her husband's youthful sin become a national institution, and a national curse for generations yet unborn.

I know not why she opened her heart that night to Adrian Gilbert, with a frankness which she would hardly have dared to use to her own family. Perhaps it was that Adrian, like his great brothers, Humphrey and Raleigh, was a man full of all lofty and delicate enthusiasms, tender and poetical, such as women cling to when their hearts are lonely; but so it was; and Adrian, half ashamed of his own ambitious dreams, sate looking at her awhile in silence; and then—

"The Lord be with you, dearest lady. Strange, how you women sit at home to love and suffer, while we men rush forth to break our hearts and yours against rocks of our own seeking! Ah well! were it not for Scripture, I should have thought that Adam, rather than Eve, had been the one who plucked the fruit of the forbidden tree."

"We women, I fear, did the deed nevertheless; for we bear the doom of it our lives long."

"You always remind me, madam, of my dear Mrs. Leigh of Burrough, and her counsels."

"Do you see her often? I hear of her as one of the Lord's most precious vessels."

"I would have done more ere now than see her," said he with a blush, "had she allowed me: but she lives only for the memory of her husband and the fame of her noble sons."

As he spoke the door opened, and in walked, wrapped in his rough sea-gown, none other than one of those said noble sons.

Adrian turned pale.

"Amyas Leigh! What brings you hither? How fares my brother? Where is the ship?"

"Your brother is well, Mr. Gilbert. The Golden Hind is gone on to Dartmouth, with Mr. Hayes. I came ashore here, meaning to go north to Bideford, ere I went to London. I called at Drake's just now, but he was away."

"The Golden Hind? What brings her home so soon?"

"Yet welcome ever, sir," said Mrs. Hawkins. "This is a great surprise, though. Captain John did not look for you till next year."

Amyas was silent.

"Something is wrong!" cried Adrian. "Speak!"

Amyas tried, but could not.

"Will you drive a man mad, sir? Has the adventure failed? You said my brother was well."

"He is well."

"Then what—Why do you look at me in that fashion, sir?" and springing up, Adrian rushed forward, and held the candle to Amyas's face.

Amyas's lip quivered, as he laid his hand on Adrian's shoulder.

"Your great and glorious brother, sir, is better bestowed than in settling Newfoundland."

"Dead?" shrieked Adrian.

"He is with the God whom he served!"

"He was always with him, like Enoch: parable me no parables, if you love me, sir!"

"And, like Enoch, he was not; for God took him."

Adrian clasped his hands over his forehead, and leaned against the table.

"Go on, sir, go on. God will give me strength to hear all."

And gradually Amyas opened to Adrian that tragic story, which Mr. Hayes has long ago told far too well to allow a second edition of it from me; of the unruliness of the men, ruffians, as I said before, caught up at hap-hazard; of conspiracies to carry off the ships, plunder of fishing vessels, desertions multiplying daily; licences from the General to the lazy and fearful to return home: till Adrian broke out with a groan—

"From him? Conspired against him? Deserted from him? Dotards, buzzards? Where would they have found such another leader?"

"Your illustrious brother, sir," said Amyas, "if you will pardon me, was a very great philosopher, but not so much of a general."

"General, sir? Where was braver man?"

"Not on God's earth: but that does not make a general, sir. If Cortes had been brave and no more, Mexico would have been Mexico still. The truth is, sir, Cortes, like my Captain Drake, knew when to hang a man; and your great brother did not."

Amyas, as I suppose, was right. Gilbert was a man who could be angry enough at baseness or neglect, but who was too kindly to punish it; he was one who could form the wisest and best digested plans, but who could not stoop to that hail-fellow-well-met drudgery among his subordinates which has been the talisman of great captains.

Then Amyas went on to tell the rest of his story; the setting sail from St. John's to discover the southward coast; Sir Humphrey's chivalrous determination to go in the little Squirrel of only ten tons, and "overcharged with nettings, fights, and small ordnance," not only because she was more fit to examine the creeks, but because he had heard of some taunt against him among the men, that he was afraid of the sea.

After that, woe on woe; how, seven days after they left Cape Raz, their largest ship, the Delight, after she had "most part of the night" (I quote Hayes), "like the swan that singeth before her death, continued in sounding of trumpets, drums, and fifes, also winding of the cornets and hautboys, and, in the end of their jollity, left off with the battle and doleful knells," struck the next day (the Golden Hind and the Squirrel sheering off just in time) upon unknown shoals; where were lost all but fourteen, and among them Frank's philosopher friend, poor Budæus; and those who escaped, after all horrors of cold and famine, were cast on shore in Newfoundland. How, worn out with hunger and want of clothes, the crews of the two remaining ships persuaded Sir Humphrey to sail toward England on the 31st of August; and on "that very instant, even in winding about," beheld close alongside "a very lion in shape, hair, and colour, not swimming, but sliding on the water, with his whole body; who passed along, turning his head to and fro, yawning and gaping wide, with ugly demonstration of long teeth and glaring eyes; and to bid us farewell (coming right against the Hind) he sent forth

a horrible voice, roaring or bellowing as doth a lion." "What opinion others had thereof, and chiefly the General himself, I forbear to deliver; but he took it for bonum omen, rejoicing that he was to war against such an enemy, if it were the devil."

"And the devil it was, doubtless," said Adrian, "the roaring lion who goes about seeking whom he may devour."

"He has not got your brother, at least," quoth Amyas.

"No," rejoined Mrs. Hawkins (smile not, reader, for those were days in which men believed in the devil); "he roared for joy to think how many poor souls would be left still in heathen darkness by Sir Humphrey's death. God be with that good knight, and send all mariners where he is now!"

Then Amyas told the last scene; how, when they were off the Azores, the storms came on heavier than ever, with "terrible seas, breaking short and pyramid-wise," till, on the 9th September, the tiny Squirrel nearly foundered and yet recovered; "and the General, sitting abaft with a book in his hand, cried out to us in the Hind so oft as we did approach within hearing, 'We are as near heaven by sea as by land,' reiterating the same speech, well beseeming a soldier resolute in Jesus Christ, as I can testify he was.

"The same Monday, about twelve of the clock, or not long after, the frigate (the Squirrel) being ahead of us in the Golden Hind, suddenly her lights were out; and withal our watch cried, the General was cast away, which was true; for in that moment, the frigate

was devoured and swallowed up of the sea." And so ended (I have used Hayes' own words) Amyas Leigh's story.

"Oh, my brother! my brother!" moaned poor Adrian; "the glory of his house, the glory of Devon!"

"Ah! what will the Queen say?" asked Mrs. Hawkins through her tears.

"Tell me," asked Adrian, "had he the jewel on when he died?"

"The Queen's jewel? He always wore that, and his own posy too, 'Mutare vel timere sperno.' He wore it; and he lived it."

"Ay," said Adrian, "the same to the last!"

"Not quite that," said Amyas. "He was a meeker man latterly than he used to be. As he said himself once, a better refiner than any whom he had on board had followed him close all the seas over, and purified him in the fire. And gold seven times tried he was, when God, having done his work in him, took him home at last."

And so the talk ended. There was no doubt that the expedition had been an utter failure; Adrian was a ruined man; and Amyas had lost his venture.

Adrian rose, and begged leave to retire; he must collect himself.

"Poor gentleman!" said Mrs. Hawkins; "it is little else he has left to collect."

"Or I either," said Amyas. "I was going to ask you to lend me one of your son's shirts, and five pounds to get myself and my men home."

"Five? Fifty, Mr. Leigh! God forbid that John

Hawkins's wife should refuse her last penny to a distressed mariner, and he a gentleman born. But you must eat and drink."

"It's more than I have done for many a day worth speaking of."

And Amyas sat down in his rags to a good supper, while Mrs. Hawkins told him all the news which she could of his mother, whom Adrian Gilbert had seen a few months before in London; and then went on, naturally enough, to the Bideford news.

"And by the by, Captain Leigh, I've sad news for you from your place; and I had it from one who was there at the time. You must know a Spanish captain, a prisoner——"

"What, the one I sent home from Smerwick?"

"You sent? Mercy on us! Then, perhaps, you've heard—"

"How can I have heard? What?"

"That he's gone off, the villain?"

"Without paying his ransom?"

"I can't say that; but there's a poor innocent young maid gone off with him, one Salterne's daughter—the Popish serpent!"

"Rose Salterne, the mayor's daughter, the Rose of Torridge!"

"That's her. Bless your dear soul, what ails you?"

Amyas had dropped back in his seat as if he had been shot; but he recovered himself before kind Mrs. Hawkins could rush to the cupboard for cordials.

"You'll forgive me, Madam; but I'm weak from

the sea; and your good ale has turned me a bit dizzy, I think."

"Ay, yes, 'tis too, too heavy, till you've been on shore awhile. Try the aqua vitæ; my Captain John has it right good; and a bit too fond of it too, poor dear soul, between whiles, Heaven forgive him!"

So she poured some strong brandy and water down Amyas's throat, in spite of his refusals, and sent him to bed, but not to sleep; and after a night of tossing, he started for Bideford, having obtained the means for so doing from Mrs. Hawkins.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW SALVATION YEO SLEW THE KING OF THE GUBBINGS.

"Ignorance and evil, even in full flight, deal terrible back-handed strokes at their pursuers."—HELPS.

Now I am sorry to say, for the honour of my country, that it was by no means a safe thing in those days to travel from Plymouth to the north of Devon; because, to get to your journey's end, unless you were minded to make a circuit of many miles, you must needs pass through the territory of a foreign and hostile potentate, who had many times ravaged the dominions, and defeated the forces of her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, and was named (behind his back at least) the King of the Gubbings. "So now I dare call them," says Fuller, "secured by distance, which one of more valour durst not do to their face, for fear their fury fall upon him. Yet hitherto have I met with none who could render a reason of their name. We call the shavings of fish (which are little worth) gubbings; and sure it is that they are sensible that the word importeth shame and disgrace.

"As for the suggestion of my worthy and learned friend, Mr. Joseph Maynard, that such as did 'in-

habitare montes gibberosos,' were called Gubbings, such will smile at the ingenuity who dissent from the truth of the etymology.

"I have read of an England beyond Wales, but the Gubbings land is a Scythia within England, and they pure heathens therein. It lieth nigh Brent. For in the edge of Dartmoor it is reported that, some two hundred years since, two bad women, being with child, fled thither to hide themselves; to whom certain lewd fellows resorted, and this was their first original. They are a peculiar of their own making, exempt from bishop, archdeacon, and all authority, either ecclesiastical or civil. They live in cots (rather holes than houses) like swine, having all in common, multiplied without marriage into many hundreds. Their language is the dross of the dregs of the vulgar Devonian; and the more learned a man is, the worse he can understand them. During our civil wars no soldiers were quartered upon them, for fear of being quartered amongst them. Their wealth consisteth in other men's goods; they live by stealing the sheep on the moors; and vain is it for any to search their houses, being a work beneath the pains of any sheriff, and above the power of any constable. Such is their fleetness, they will outrun many horses; vivaciousness, they outlive most men; living in an ignorance of luxury, the extinguisher of life. They hold together like bees; offend one, and all will revenge his quarrel.

"But now I am informed that they begin to be civilised, and tender their children to baptism, and return to be men, yea, Christians again. I hope no

civil people amongst us will turn barbarians, now these barbarians begin to be civilised."[1]

With which quip against the Anabaptists of his day, Fuller ends his story; and I leave him to set forth how Amyas, in fear of these same Scythians and heathens, rode out of Plymouth on a right good horse, in his full suit of armour, carrying lance and sword, and over and above two great dags, or horse-pistols; and behind him Salvation Yeo, and five or six north Devon men (who had served with him in Ireland, and were returning on furlough), clad in head-pieces and quilted jerkins, each man with his pike and sword, and Yeo with arquebuse and match, while two sumpter ponies carried the baggage of this formidable troop.

They pushed on as fast as they could, through Tavistock, to reach before nightfall Lydford, where they meant to sleep; but what with buying the horses, and other delays, they had not been able to start before noon; and night fell just as they reached the frontiers of the enemy's country. A dreary place enough it was, by the wild glare of sunset. A high table-land of heath, banked on the right by the crags and hills of Dartmoor, and sloping away to the south and west toward the foot of the great cone of Brent-Tor, which towered up like an extinct volcano (as some say that it really is), crowned with the tiny church, the votive offering of some Plymouth merchant of old times, who vowed in sore distress to build a church to the Blessed Virgin on the first point of English land which he should see. Far away, down those waste

[1] Fuller, p. 398.

slopes, they could see the tiny threads of blue smoke rising from the dens of the Gubbings; and more than once they called a halt, to examine whether distant furze-bushes and ponies might not be the patrols of an advancing army. It is all very well to laugh at it now, in the nineteenth century, but it was no laughing matter then; as they found before they had gone two miles farther.

On the middle of the down stood a wayside inn; a desolate and villanous-looking lump of lichen-spotted granite, with windows paper-patched, and rotting thatch kept down by stones and straw-bands; and at the back a rambling courtledge of barns and walls, around which pigs and barefoot children grunted in loving communion of dirt. At the door, rapt apparently in the contemplation of the mountain peaks which glowed rich orange in the last lingering sun-rays, but really watching which way the sheep on the moor were taking, stood the inn-keeper, a brawny, sodden-visaged, blear-eyed six feet of brutishness, holding up his hose with one hand, for want of points, and clawing with the other his elf-locks, on which a fair sprinkling of feathers might denote; first that he was just out of bed, having been out sheep-stealing all the night before; and secondly, that by natural genius he had anticipated the opinion of that great apostle of sluttishness, Fridericus Dedekind, and his faithful disciple Dekker, which last speaks thus to all gulls and grobians:—"Consider that as those trees of cobweb lawn, woven by spinners in the fresh May mornings, do dress the curled heads of the mountains, and

adorn the swelling bosoms of the valleys; or as those snowy fleeces, which the naked briar steals from the innocent sheep to make himself a warm winter livery, are, to either of them both, an excellent ornament; so make thou account, that to have feathers sticking here and there on thy head will embellish thee, and set thy crown out rarely. None dare upbraid thee, that like a beggar thou hast lain on straw, or like a travelling pedlar upon musty flocks; for those feathers will rise up as witnesses to choke him that says so, and to prove thy bed to have been of the softest down." Even so did those feathers bear witness that the possessor of Rogues' Harbour Inn, on Brent-Tor Down, whatever else he lacked, lacked not geese enough to keep him in soft lying.

Presently he spies Amyas and his party coming slowly over the hill, pricks up his ears, and counts them; sees Amyas's armour; shakes his head and grunts; and then, being a man of few words, utters a sleepy howl—

"Mirooi!—Fushing pooale!"

A strapping lass—whose only covering (for country women at work in those days dispensed with the ornament of a gown) is a green bodice and red petticoat, neither of them over ample—brings out his fishing-rod and basket, and the man, having tied up his hose with some ends of string, examines the footlink.

"Don vlies' gone!"

"May be," says Mary; "shouldn't hav' left mun out to coort. May be old hen's ate mun off. I see her chocking about a while agone."

The host receives this intelligence with an oath, and replies by a violent blow at Mary's head, which she, accustomed to such slight matters, dodges, and then returns the blow with good effect on the shock head.

Whereon mine host, equally accustomed to such slight matters, quietly shambles off, howling as he departs—

"Tell patrico!"

Mary runs in, combs her hair, slips a pair of stockings and her best gown over her dirt, and awaits the coming guests, who make a few long faces at the "mucksy sort of a place," but prefer to spend the night there than to bivouac close to the enemy's camp.

So the old hen who has swallowed the dun fly is killed, plucked, and roasted, and certain "black Dartmoor mutton" is put on the gridiron, and being compelled to confess the truth by that fiery torment, proclaims itself to all noses as red-deer venison. In the meanwhile Amyas has put his horse and the ponies into a shed, to which he can find neither lock nor key, and therefore returns grumbling, not without fear for his steed's safety. The baggage is heaped in a corner of the room, and Amyas stretches his legs before a turf fire; while Yeo, who has his notions about the place, posts himself at the door, and the men are seized with a desire to superintend the cooking, probably to be attributed to the fact that Mary is cook.

Presently Yeo comes in again.

"There's a gentleman just coming up, sir, all alone."

"Ask him to make one of our party, then, with my compliments." Yeo goes out, and returns in five minutes.

"Please, sir, he's gone in back ways, by the court."

"Well, he has an odd taste, if he makes himself at home here."

Out goes Yeo again, and comes back once more after five minutes, in high excitement.

"Come out, sir; for goodness' sake come out. I've got him. Safe as a rat in a trap, I have!"

"Who?"

"A Jesuit, sir."

"Nonsense, man!"

"I tell you truth, sir. I went round the house, for I didn't like the looks of him as he came up. I knew he was one of them villains the minute he came up, by the way he turned in his toes, and put down his feet so still and careful, like as if he was afraid of offending God at every step. So I just put my eye between the wall and the dern of the gate, and I saw him come up to the back door and knock, and call 'Mary!' quite still, like any Jesuit; and the wench flies out to him ready to eat him; and 'Go away,' I heard her say, 'there's a dear man;' and then something about a 'queer cuffin' (that's a justice in these canters' thieves' Latin); and with that he takes out a somewhat—I'll swear it was one of those Popish Agnuses—and gives it her; and she kisses it, and crosses herself, and asks him if that's the right way, and then puts it into her bosom, and he says, 'Bless you, my daughter;' and then I was sure of the dog:

and he slips quite still to the stable, and peeps in, and when he sees no one there, in he goes, and out I go, and shut to the door, and back a cart that was there up against it, and call out one of the men to watch the stable, and the girl's crying like mad."

"What a fool's trick, man! How do you know that he is not some honest gentleman after all?"

"Fool or none, sir; honest gentlemen don't give maidens Agnuses. I've put him in; and if you want him let out again, you must come and do it yourself, for my conscience is against it, sir. If the Lord's enemies are delivered into my hand, I'm answerable, sir," went on Yeo as Amyas hurried out with him. "'Tis written, 'If any let one of them go, his life shall be for the life of him.'"

So Amyas ran out, pulled back the cart grumbling, opened the door, and began a string of apologies to—his cousin Eustace.

Yes, here he was, with such a countenance, half foolish, half venomous, as Reynard wears when the last spadeful of earth is thrown back, and he is revealed sitting disconsolately on his tail within a yard of the terriers' noses.

Neither cousin spoke for a minute or two. At last Amyas,—

"Well, cousin hide-and-seek, how long have you added horse-stealing to your other trades?"

"My dear Amyas," said Eustace very meekly, "I may surely go into an inn stable without intending to steal what is in it."

"Of course, old fellow," said Amyas, mollified, "I

was only in jest. But what brings you here? Not prudence, certainly."

"I am bound to know no prudence save for the Lord's work."

"That's giving away Agnus Deis, and deceiving poor heathen wenches, I suppose," said Yeo.

Eustace answered pretty roundly,—

"Heathens? Yes, truly; you Protestants leave these poor wretches heathens, and then insult and persecute those who, with a devotion unknown to you, labour at the danger of their lives to make them Christians. Mr. Amyas Leigh, you can give me up to be hanged at Exeter, if it shall so please you to disgrace your own family; but from this spot neither you, no, nor all the myrmidons of your Queen, shall drive me, while there is a soul here left unsaved."

"Come out of the stable, at least," said Amyas; "you don't want to make the horses Papists, as well as the asses, do you? Come out, man, and go to the devil your own way. I shan't inform against you; and Yeo here will hold his tongue if I tell him, I know."

"It goes sorely against my conscience, sir; but being that he is your cousin, of course——"

"Of course; and now come in and eat with me; supper's just ready, and bygones shall be bygones, if you will have them so."

How much forgiveness Eustace felt in his heart, I know not: but he knew, of course, that he ought to forgive; and to go in and eat with Amyas was to perform an act of forgiveness, and for the best of

motives, too, for by it the cause of the Church might be furthered; and acts and motives being correct, what more was needed? So in he went; and yet he never forgot that scar upon his cheek; and Amyas could not look him in the face, but Eustace must fancy that his eyes were on the scar, and peep up from under his lids, to see if there was any smile of triumph on that honest visage. They talked away over the venison, guardedly enough at first; but as they went on, Amyas's straightforward kindliness warmed poor Eustace's frozen heart; and ere they were aware, they found themselves talking over old haunts and old passages of their boyhood—uncles, aunts, and cousins; and Eustace, without any sinister intention, asked Amyas why he was going to Bideford, while Frank and his mother were in London.

"To tell you the truth, I cannot rest till I have heard the whole story about poor Rose Salterne."

"What about her?" cried Eustace.

"Do you not know?"

"How should I know anything here? For heaven's sake, what has happened?"

Amyas told him, wondering at his eagerness, for he had never had the least suspicion of Eustace's love.

Eustace shrieked aloud.

"Fool, fool that I have been! Caught in my own trap! Villain, villain that he is! After all he promised me at Lundy!"

And springing up, Eustace stamped up and down the room, gnashing his teeth, tossing his head from side to side, and clutching with outstretched hands at

the empty air, with the horrible gesture (heaven grant that no reader has ever witnessed it!) of that despair which still seeks blindly for the object which it knows is lost for ever.

Amyas sat thunderstruck. His first impulse was to ask, "Lundy? What knew you of him? What had he or you to do at Lundy?" but pity conquered curiosity.

"Oh, Eustace! And you then loved her too?"

"Don't speak to me! Loved her? Yes, sir, and had as good a right to love her as any one of your precious brotherhood of the Rose. Don't speak to me, I say, or I shall do you a mischief!"

So Eustace knew of the brotherhood too! Amyas longed to ask him how; but what use in that? If he knew it, he knew it; and what harm? So he only answered,—

"My good cousin, why be wroth with me? If you really love her, now is the time to take counsel with me how best we shall——"

Eustace did not let him finish his sentence. Conscious that he had betrayed himself upon more points than one, he stopped short in his walk, suddenly collected himself by one great effort, and eyed Amyas from underneath his brows with the old down look.

"How best we shall do what, my valiant cousin?" said he, in a meaning and half scornful voice. "What does your most chivalrous brotherhood of the Rose purpose in such a case?"

Amyas, a little nettled, stood on his guard in return, and answered bluntly,—

"What the brotherhood of the Rose will do, I can't yet say. What it ought to do, I have a pretty sure guess."

"So have I. To hunt her down as you would an outlaw, because forsooth she has dared to love a Catholic; to murder her lover in her arms, and drag her home again stained with his blood, to be forced, by threats and persecution, to renounce that church into whose maternal bosom she has doubtless long since found rest and holiness!"

"If she has found holiness, it matters little to me where she has found it, Master Eustace: but that is the very point that I should be glad to know for certain."

"And you will go and discover for yourself?"

"Have you no wish to discover it also?"

"And if I had, what would that be to you?"

"Only," said Amyas, trying hard to keep his temper, "that, if we had the same purpose, we might sail in the same ship."

"You intend to sail, then?"

"I mean simply, that we might work together."

"Our paths lie on very different roads, sir!"

"I am afraid you never spoke a truer word, sir. In the meanwhile, ere we part, be so kind as to tell me what you meant by saying that you had met this Spaniard at Lundy?"

"I shall refuse to answer that."

"You will please to recollect, Eustace, that however good friends we have been for the last half-hour, you are in my power. I have a right to know the bottom of this matter; and, by heaven, I will know it."

"In your power? see that you are not in mine! Remember, sir, that you are within a—within a few miles, at least, of those who will obey me, their Catholic benefactor: but who owe no allegiance to those Protestant authorities who have left them to the lot of the beasts which perish."

Amyas was very angry. He wanted but little more to make him catch Eustace by the shoulders, shake the life out of him, and deliver him into the tender guardianship of Yeo: but he knew that to take him at all was to bring certain death on him, and disgrace on the family; and remembering Frank's conduct on that memorable night at Clovelly, he kept himself down.

"Take me," said Eustace, "if you will, sir. You, who complain of us that we keep no faith with heretics, will perhaps recollect that you asked me into this room as your guest: and that in your good faith I trusted when I entered it."

The argument was a worthless one in law; for Eustace had been a prisoner before he was a guest, and Amyas was guilty of something very like misprision of treason in not handing him over to the nearest justice. However, all he did was, to go to the door, open it, and bowing to his cousin, bid him walk out and go to the devil, since he seemed to have set his mind on ending his days in the company of that personage.

Whereon Eustace vanished.

"Pooh!" said Amyas to himself: "I can find out enough, and too much, I fear, without the help of

such crooked vermin. I must see Cary; I must see Salterne; and I suppose, if I am ready to do my duty, I shall learn somehow what it is. Now to sleep; to-morrow up and away to what God sends."

"Come in hither, men," shouted he down the passage, "and sleep here. Haven't you had enough of this villanous sour cider?"

The men came in yawning, and settled themselves to sleep on the floor.

"Where's Yeo?"

No one knew; he had gone out to say his prayers, and had not returned.

"Never mind," said Amyas, who suspected some plot on the old man's part. "He'll take care of himself, I'll warrant him."

"No fear of that, sir;" and the four tars were soon snoring in concert round the fire, while Amyas laid himself on the settle, with his saddle for a pillow.

. . . . .

It was about midnight, when Amyas leaped to his feet, or rather fell upon his back, upsetting saddle, settle, and finally, table, under the notion that ten thousand flying dragons were bursting in the window close to his ear, with howls most fierce and fell. The flying dragons past, however, being only a flock of terror-stricken geese, which flew flapping and screaming round the corner of the house: but the noise which had startled them did not pass; and another minute made it evident that a sharp fight was going on in the courtyard, and that Yeo was hallooing lustily for help.

Out turned the men, sword in hand, burst the back

door open, stumbling over pails and pitchers, and into the courtyard, where Yeo, his back against the stable-door, was holding his own manfully with sword and buckler against a dozen men.

Dire and manifold was the screaming; geese screamed, chickens screamed, pigs screamed, donkeys screamed, Mary screamed from an upper window; and to complete the chorus, a flock of plovers, attracted by the noise, wheeled round and round over head, and added their screams also to that Dutch concert.

The screaming went on, but the fight ceased; for, as Amyas rushed into the yard, the whole party of ruffians took to their heels, and vanished over a low hedge at the other end of the yard.

"Are you hurt, Yeo?"

"Not a scratch, thank Heaven! But I've got two of them, the ringleaders, I have. One of them's against the wall. Your horse did for t'other."

The wounded man was lifted up; a huge ruffian, nearly as big as Amyas himself. Yeo's sword had passed through his body. He groaned and choked for breath.

"Carry him in-doors. Where is the other?"

"Dead as a herring, in the straw. Have a care, men, have a care how you go in! the horses are near mad!"

However, the man was brought out after a while. With him all was over. They could feel neither pulse nor breath.

"Carry him in too, poor wretch. And now, Yeo, what is the meaning of all this?"

Yeo's story was soon told. He could not get out of his Puritan head the notion (quite unfounded, of course) that Eustace had meant to steal the horses. He had seen the innkeeper sneak off at their approach; and expecting some night-attack, he had taken up his lodging for the night in the stable.

As he expected, an attempt was made. The door was opened (how, he could not guess, for he had fastened it inside), and two fellows came in, and began to loose the beasts. Yeo's account was, that he seized the big fellow, who drew a knife on him, and broke loose; the horses, terrified at the scuffle, kicked right and left; one man fell, and the other ran out, calling for help, with Yeo at his heels; "Whereon," said Yeo, "seeing a dozen more on me with clubs and bows, I thought best to shorten the number while I could, ran the rascal through, and stood on my ward; and only just in time I was, what's more; there's two arrows in the house wall, and two or three more in my buckler, which I caught up as I went out, for I had hung it close by the door, you see, sir, to be all ready in case:" said the cunning old Philistine-slayer, as they went in after the wounded man.

But hardly had they stumbled through the low doorway into the back-kitchen when a fresh hubbub arose inside—more shouts for help. Amyas ran forward, breaking his head against the doorway, and beheld, as soon as he could see for the flashes in his eyes, an old acquaintance, held on each side by a sturdy sailor.

With one arm in the sleeve of his doublet, and the other in a not over spotless shirt; holding up his hose

with one hand, and with the other a candle, whereby he had lighted himself to his own confusion; foaming with rage, stood Mr. Evan Morgans, alias Father Parsons, looking, between his confused habiliments and his fiery visage (as Yeo told him to his face), "the very moral of a half-plucked turkey-cock." And behind him, dressed, stood Eustace Leigh.

"We found the maid letting these here two out by the front door," said one of the captors.

"Well, Mr. Parsons," said Amyas; "and what are you about here? A pretty nest of thieves and Jesuits we seem to have routed out this evening."

"About my calling, sir," said Parsons, stoutly. "By your leave, I shall prepare this my wounded lamb for that account to which your man's cruelty has untimely sent him."

The wounded man, who lay upon the floor, heard Parson's voice, and moaned for the "Patrico."

"You see, sir," said he pompously, "the sheep know their shepherd's voice."

"The wolves you mean, you hypocritical scoundrel!" said Amyas, who could not contain his disgust. "Let the fellow truss up his points, lads, and do his work. After all, the man is dying."

"The requisite matters, sir, are not at hand," said Parsons, unabashed.

"Eustace, go and fetch his matters for him; you seem to be in all his plots."

Eustace went silently and sullenly.

"What's that fresh noise at the back, now?"

"The maid, sir, a wailing over her uncle; the

fellow that we saw sneak away when we came up. It was him the horse killed."

It was true. The wretched host had slipped off on their approach, simply to call the neighbouring outlaws to the spoil; and he had been filled with the fruit of his own devices.

"His blood be on his own head," said Amyas.

"I question, sir," said Yeo, in a low voice, "whether some of it will not be on the heads of those proud prelates who go clothed in purple and fine linen, instead of going forth to convert such as he, and then wonder how these Jesuits get hold of them. If they give place to the devil in their sheepfolds, sure he'll come in and lodge there. Look, sir, there's a sight in a gospel land!"

And, indeed, the sight was curious enough. For Parsons was kneeling by the side of the dying man, listening earnestly to the confession which the man sobbed out in his gibberish, between the spasms of his wounded chest. Now and then Parsons shook his head; and when Eustace returned with the holy wafer, and the oil for extreme unction, he asked him, in a low voice, "Ballard, interpret for me."

And Eustace knelt down on the other side of the sufferer, and interpreted his thieves' dialect into Latin; and the dying man held a hand of each, and turned first to one and then to the other stupid eyes, —not without affection, though, and gratitude.

"I can't stand this mummery any longer," said Yeo. "Here's a soul perishing before my eyes, and it's on my conscience to speak a word in season."

"Silence!" whispered Amyas, holding him back by the arm; "he knows them, and he don't know you; they are the first who ever spoke to him as if he had a soul to be saved, and first come, first served; you can do no good. See, the man's face is brightening already."

"But, sir, 'tis a false peace."

"At all events he is confessing his sins, Yeo; and if that's not good for him, and you, and me, what is?"

"Yea, Amen! sir; but this is not to the right person."

"How do you know his words will not go to the right person after all, though he may not send them there? By heaven! the man is dead!"

It was so. The dark catalogue of brutal deeds had been gasped out; but ere the words of absolution could follow, the head had fallen back, and all was over.

"Confession in extremis is sufficient," said Parsons to Eustace ("Ballard," as Parsons called him, to Amyas's surprise), as he rose. "As for the rest, the intention will be accepted instead of the act."

"The Lord have mercy on his soul!" said Eustace.

"His soul is lost before our very eyes," said Yeo.

"Mind your own business," said Amyas.

"Humph; but I'll tell you, sir, what our business is, if you'll step aside with me. I find that poor fellow that lies dead is none other than the leader of the Gubbings; the king of them, as they dare to call him."

"Well, what of that?"

"Mark my words, sir, if we have not a hundred

stout rogues upon us before two hours are out; forgive us they never will; and if we get off with our lives, which I don't much expect, we shall leave our horses behind; for we can hold the house, sir, well enough till morning: but the courtyard we can't, that's certain!"

"We had better march at once, then."

"Think, sir; if they catch us up—as they are sure to do, knowing the country better than we—how will our shot stand their arrows?"

"True, old wisdom; we must keep the road; and we must keep together; and so be a mark for them, while they will be behind every rock and bank; and two or three flights of arrows will do our business for us. Humph! stay, I have a plan." And stepping forward he spoke—

"Eustace, you will be so kind as to go back to your lambs; and tell them, that if they meddle with us cruel wolves again to-night, we are ready and willing to fight to the death, and have plenty of shot and powder at their service. Father Parsons, you will be so kind as to accompany us; it is but fitting that the shepherd should be hostage for his sheep."

"If you carry me off this spot, sir, you carry my corpse only," said Parsons. "I may as well die here as be hanged elsewhere, like my martyred brother Campian."

"If you take him, you must take me too," said Eustace.

"What if we won't?"

"How will you gain by that? you can only leave

me here. You cannot make me go to the Gubbings, if I do not choose."

Amyas uttered, sotto voce, an anathema on Jesuits, Gubbings, and things in general. He was in a great hurry to get to Bideford, and he feared that this business would delay him, as it was, a day or two. He wanted to hang Parsons: he did not want to hang Eustace; and Eustace, he knew, was well aware of that latter fact, and played his game accordingly: but time ran on, and he had to answer sulkily enough—

"Well then; if you, Eustace, will go and give my message to your converts, I will promise to set Mr. Parsons free again before we come to Lydford town; and I advise you, if you have any regard for his life, to see that your eloquence be persuasive enough; for as sure as I am an Englishman, and he none, if the Gubbings attack us, the first bullet that I shall fire at them will have gone through his scoundrelly brains."

Parsons still kicked.

"Very well, then, my merry men all. Tie this gentleman's hands behind his back, get the horses out, and we'll right away up into Dartmoor, find a good high tor, stand our ground there till morning, and then carry him into Okehampton to the nearest justice. If he chooses to delay me in my journey, it is fair that I should make him pay for it."

Whereon Parsons gave in, and being fast tied by his arm to Amyas's saddle, trudged alongside his horse for several weary miles, while Yeo walked by his side, like a friar by a condemned criminal; and in order to keep up his spirits, told him the woful end of Nicholas

Saunders the Legate, and how he was found starved to death in a bog.

"And if you wish, sir, to follow in his blessed steps, which I heartily hope you will do, you have only to go over that big cow-backed hill there on your right hand, and down again the other side to Crawmere pool, and there you'll find as pretty a bog to die in as ever Jesuit needed: and your ghost may sit there on a grass tummock, and tell your beads without any one asking for you till the day of judgment; and much good may it do you!"

At which imagination Yeo was actually heard, for the first and last time in this history, to laugh most heartily.

His ho-ho's had scarcely died away, when they saw shining under the moon the old tower of Lydford Castle.

"Cast the fellow off now," said Amyas.

"Ay, ay, sir!" and Yeo and Simon Evans stopped behind, and did not come up for ten minutes after.

"What have you been about so long?"

"Why, sir," said Evans, "you see the man had a very fair pair of hose on, and a bran-new kersey doublet, very warm-lined; and so, thinking it a pity good clothes should be wasted on such noxious trade, we've just brought them along with us."

"Spoiling the Egyptians," said Yeo as comment.

"And what have you done with the man?"

"Hove him over the bank, sir; he pitched into a big furze-bush, and for aught I know, there he'll bide."

"You rascal, have you killed him?"

"Never fear, sir," said Yeo, in his cool fashion. "A Jesuit has as many lives as a cat, and, I believe, rides broomsticks post, like a witch. He would be at Lydford now before us, if his master Satan had any business for him there."

Leaving on their left Lydford and its ill-omened castle (which, a century after, was one of the principal scenes of Judge Jeffreys's cruelty), Amyas and his party trudged on through the mire toward Okehampton till sunrise; and ere the vapours had lifted from the mountain tops, they were descending the long slopes from Sourton down, while Yestor and Amicombe slept steep and black beneath their misty pall; and roaring far below unseen,

> "Ockment leapt from crag and cloud
> Down her cataracts, laughing loud."

The voice of the stream recalled these words to Amyas's mind. The nymph of Torridge had spoken them upon the day of his triumph. He recollected, too, his vexation on that day at not seeing Rose Salterne. Why, he had never seen her since. Never seen her now for six years and more! Of her ripened beauty he knew only by hearsay; she was still to him the lovely fifteen years' girl, for whose sake he had smitten the Barnstaple draper over the quay. What a chain of petty accidents had kept them from meeting, though so often within a mile of each other! "And what a lucky one!" said practical old Amyas to himself. "If I had seen her as she is now, I might have loved her as Frank does—poor Frank! what will

he say? What does he say, for he must know it already? And what ought I to say—to do rather, for talking is no use on this side the grave, nor on the other either, I expect?" And then he asked himself, whether his old oath meant nothing or something; whether it was a mere tavern frolic, or a sacred duty. And he held, the more that he looked at it, that it meant the latter.

But what could he do? He had nothing on earth but his sword, so he could not travel to find her. After all, she might not be gone far. Perhaps not gone at all. It might be a mistake, an exaggerated scandal. He would hope so. And yet it was evident that there had been some passages between her and Don Guzman. Eustace's mysterious words about the promise at Lundy proved that. The villain! He had felt all along that he was a villain: but just the one to win a woman's heart, too. Frank had been away —all the brotherhood away. What a fool he had been, to turn the wolf loose into the sheepfold! And yet who would have dreamed of it? . . .

"At all events," said Amyas, trying to comfort himself, "I need not complain. I have lost nothing. I stood no more chance of her against Frank than I should have stood against the Don. So there is no use for me to cry about the matter." And he tried to hum a tune concerning the general frailty of women, but nevertheless, like Sir Hugh, felt that "he had a great disposition to cry."

He never had expected to win her, and yet it seemed bitter to know that she was lost to him for

ever. It was not so easy for a heart of his make to toss away the image of a first love; and all the less easy, because that image was stained and ruined.

"Curses on the man who had done that deed! I will yet have his heart's blood somehow, if I go round the world again to find him. If there's no law for it on earth, there's law in heaven, or I'm much mistaken."

With which determination he rode into the ugly, dirty, and stupid town of Okehampton, with which fallen man (by some strange perversity) has chosen to defile one of the loveliest sites in the pleasant land of Devon. And heartily did Amyas abuse the old town that day; for he was detained there, as he expected, full three hours, while the Justice Shallow of the place was sent for from his farm (whither he had gone at sunrise, after the early-rising fashion of those days) to take Yeo's deposition concerning last night's affray. Moreover, when Shallow came, he refused to take the depositions, because they ought to have been made before a brother Shallow at Lydford; and in the wrangling which ensued, was very near finding out what Amyas (fearing fresh loss of time and worse evils beside) had commanded to be concealed, namely, the presence of Jesuits in that Moorland Utopia. Then, in broadest Devon,—

"And do you call this Christian conduct, sir, to set a quiet man like me upon they Gubbings, as if I was going to risk my precious life—no, nor ever a constable to Okehampton neither? Let Lydfor' men mind Lydfor' roogs, and by Lydfor' law if they will, hang

first and try after; but as for me, I've rade my Bible, and 'He that meddleth with strife is like him that taketh a dog by the ears.' So if you choose to sit down and ate your breakfast with me, well and good: but depositions I'll have none. If your man is enquired for, you'll be answerable for his appearing, in course; but I expect mortally" (with a wink), "you waint hear much more of the matter from any hand. 'Leave well alone is a good rule, but leave ill alone is a better.'—So we says round about here; and so you'll say, captain, when you be so old as I."

So Amyas sat down and ate his breakfast, and went on afterwards a long and weary day's journey, till he saw at last beneath him the broad shining river, and the long bridge and the white houses piled up the hill-side; and beyond, over Raleigh downs, the dear old tower of Northam Church.

Alas, Northam was altogether a desert to him then; and Bideford, as it turned out, hardly less so. For when he rode up to Sir Richard's door, he found that the good Knight was still in Ireland, and Lady Grenvile at Stow. Whereupon he rode back again down the High Street to that same bow-windowed Ship Tavern where the brotherhood of the Rose made their vow, and settled himself in the very room where they had supped.

"Ah! Mr. Leigh—Captain Leigh now, I beg pardon," quoth mine host. "Bideford is an empty place now-a-days, and nothing stirring, sir. What with Sir Richard to Ireland, and Sir John to London, and all the young gentlemen to the wars, there's no

one to buy good liquor, and no one to court the young ladies, neither. Sack, sir? I hope so. I haven't brewed a gallon of it this fortnight, if you'll believe me; ale, sir, and aqua vitæ, and such low-bred trade, is all I draw now-a-days. Try a pint of sherry, sir, now, to give you an appetite. You mind my sherry of old? Jane! Sherry and sugar, quick, while I pull off the Captain's boots."

Amyas sat weary and sad, while the innkeeper chattered on.

"Ah, sir! two or three like you would set the young ladies all alive again. By-the-by, there's been strange doings among them since you were here last. You mind Mistress Salterne?"

"For God's sake, don't let us have that story, man! I heard enough of it at Plymouth!" said Amyas, in so disturbed a tone that mine host looked up, and said to himself—

"Ah, poor young gentleman, he's one of the hard-hit ones."

"How is the old man?" asked Amyas, after a pause.

"Bears it well enough, sir; but a changed man. Never speaks to a soul, if he can help it. Some folk say he's not right in his head; or turned miser, or somewhat, and takes nought but bread and water, and sits up all night in the room as was hers, turning over her garments. Heaven knows what's on his mind—they do say he was over hard on her, and that drove her to it. All I know is, he has never been in here for a drop of liquor (and he came as regular every

evening as the town clock, sir) since she went, except a ten days ago, and then he met young Mr. Cary at the door, and I heard him ask Mr. Cary when you would be home, sir."

"Put on my boots again. I'll go and see him."

"Bless you, sir! What, without your sack?"

"Drink it yourself, man."

"But you wouldn't go out again this time o' night on an empty stomach, now?"

"Fill my men's stomachs for them, and never mind mine. It's market-day, is it not? Send out, and see whether Mr. Cary is still in town;" and Amyas strode out, and along the quay to Bridgeland Street, and knocked at Mr. Salterne's door.

Salterne himself opened it, with his usual stern courtesy.

"I saw you coming up the street, sir. I have been expecting this honour from you for some time past. I dreamt of you only last night, and many a night before that too. Welcome, sir, into a lonely house. I trust the good knight your general is well."

"The good knight my general is with God who made him, Mr. Salterne."

"Dead, sir?"

"Foundered at sea on our way home; and the Delight lost too."

"Humph!" growled Salterne, after a minute's silence. "I had a venture in her. I suppose it's gone. No matter—I can afford it, sir, and more, I trust. And he was three years younger than I! And Draper Heard was buried yesterday, five years

younger.—How is it that every one can die, except me? Come in, sir, come in; I have forgotten my manners."

And he led Amyas into his parlour, and called to the apprentices to run one way, and to the cook to run another.

"You must not trouble yourself to get me supper, indeed."

"I must though, sir, and the best of wine too; and old Salterne had a good tap of Alicant in old time, old time, old time, sir! and you must drink it now, whether he does or not!" and out he bustled.

Amyas sat still, wondering what was coming next, and puzzled at the sudden hilarity of the man, as well as his hospitality, so different from what the innkeeper had led him to expect.

In a minute more one of the apprentices came in to lay the cloth, and Amyas questioned him about his master.

"Thank the Lord that you are come, sir," said the lad.

"Why, then!"

"Because there'll be a chance of us poor fellows getting a little broken meat. We'm half-starved this three months—bread and dripping, bread and dripping, oh dear, sir! And now he's sent out to the inn for chickens, and game, and salads, and all that money can buy, and down in the cellar haling out the best of wine."—And the lad smacked his lips audibly at the thought.

"Is he out of his mind?"

"I can't tell; he saith as how he must save mun's money now-a-days; for he've a got a great venture on hand: but what a be he tell'th no man. They call'th mun 'bread and dripping' now, sir, all town over," said the prentice, confidentially, to Amyas.

"They do, do they, sirrah? Then they will call me bread and no dripping to-morrow!" and old Salterne, entering from behind, made a dash at the poor fellow's ears: but luckily thought better of it, having a couple of bottles in each hand.

"My dear sir," said Amyas, "you don't mean us to drink all that wine?"

"Why not, sir?" answered Salterne, in a grim, half-sneering tone, thrusting out his square-grizzled beard and chin. "Why not, sir? why should I not make merry when I have the honour of a noble captain in my house? one who has sailed the seas, sir, and cut Spaniards' throats; and may cut them again too; eh, sir? Boy, where's the kettle and the sugar?"

"What on earth is the man at?" quoth Amyas to himself—"flattering me, or laughing at me?"

"Yes," he ran on, half to himself, in a deliberate tone, evidently intending to hint more than he said, as he began brewing the sack—in plain English, hot negus; "Yes, bread and dripping for those who can't fight Spaniards; but the best that money can buy for those who can. I heard of you at Smerwick, sir,—— Yes, bread and dripping for me too—I can't fight Spaniards: but for such as you. Look here, sir; I should like to feed a crew of such up, as you'd feed a main of fighting-cocks, and then start them with a

pair of Sheffield spurs a-piece—you've a good one there to your side, sir: but don't you think a man might carry two now, and fight as they say those Chineses do, a sword to each hand? You could kill more that way, Captain Leigh, I reckon?"

Amyas half laughed.

"One will do, Mr. Salterne, if one is quick enough with it."

"Humph?—Ah—No use being in a hurry. I haven't been in a hurry. No—I waited for you; and here you are and welcome, sir! Here comes supper: a light matter, sir, you see. A capon and a brace of partridges. I had no time to feast you as you deserve."

And so he ran on all supper-time, hardly allowing Amyas to get a word in edge-ways: but heaping him with coarse flattery, and urging him to drink, till after the cloth was drawn, and the two left alone, he grew so outrageous that Amyas was forced to take him to task good-humouredly.

"Now, my dear sir, you have feasted me royally, and better far than I deserve: but why will you go about to make me drunk twice over, first with vain-glory, and then with wine?"

Salterne looked at him awhile fixedly, and then, sticking out his chin—"Because, Captain Leigh, I am a man who has all his life tried the crooked road first, and found the straight one the safer after all."

"Eh, sir? That is a strange speech for one who bears the character of the most upright man in Bideford."

"Humph. So I thought myself once, sir; and well I have proved it. But I'll be plain with you, sir. You've heard how—how I've fared since you saw me last?"

Amyas nodded his head.

"I thought so. Shame rides post. Now then, Captain Leigh, listen to me. I, being a plain man and a burgher, and one that never drew iron in my life except to mend a pen, ask you, being a gentleman and a captain and a man of honour, with a weapon to your side, and harness to your back—what would you do in my place?"

"Humph!" said Amyas, "that would very much depend on whether 'my place' was my own fault or not."

"And what if it were, sir? What if all that the charitable folks of Bideford—(Heaven reward them for their tender mercies!)—have been telling you in the last hour be true, sir,—true! and yet not half the truth?"

Amyas gave a start.

"Ah, you shrink from me! Of course a man is too righteous to forgive those who repent, though God is not."

"God knows, sir——"

"Yes, sir, God does know—all; and you shall know a little—as much as I can tell—or you understand. Come up-stairs with me, sir, as you'll drink no more; I have a liking for you. I have watched you from your boyhood, and I can trust you, and I'll show you what I never showed to mortal man but one."

And, taking up a candle, he led the way up-stairs, while Amyas followed wondering.

He stopped at a door, and unlocked it.

"There, come in. Those shutters have not been opened since she——" and the old man was silent.

Amyas looked round the room. It was a low wainscoted room, such as one sees in old houses: everything was in the most perfect neatness. The snow-white sheets on the bed were turned down as if ready for an occupant. There were books arranged on the shelves, fresh flowers on the table; the dressing-table had all its woman's mundus of pins, and rings, and brushes; even the dressing-gown lay over the chair-back. Everything was evidently just as it had been left.

"This was her room, sir," whispered the old man.

Amyas nodded silently, and half drew back.

"You need not be modest about entering it now, sir," whispered he, with a sort of sneer. "There has been no frail flesh and blood in it for many a day."

Amyas sighed.

"I sweep it out myself every morning, and keep all tidy. See here!" and he pulled open a drawer. "Here are all her gowns, and there are her hoods; and there—I know 'em all by heart now, and the place of every one. And there, sir,——"

And he opened a cupboard, where lay in rows all Rose's dolls, and the worn-out playthings of her childhood.

"That's the pleasantest place of all in the room to me," said he, whispering still: "for it minds me of

when—and maybe, she may become a little child once more, sir; it's written in the Scripture, you know——"

"Amen!" said Amyas, who felt, to his own wonder, a big tear stealing down each cheek.

"And now," he whispered, "one thing more. Look here!"—and pulling out a key, he unlocked a chest, and lifted up tray after tray of necklaces and jewels, furs, lawns, cloth of gold. "Look there! Two thousand pound won't buy that chest. Twenty years have I been getting those things together. That's the cream of many a Levant voyage, and East Indian voyage, and West Indian voyage. My Lady Bath can't match those pearls in her grand house at Tawstock; I got 'em from a Genoese, though, and paid for 'em. Look at that embroidered lawn! There's not such a piece in London; no, nor in Alexandria, I'll warrant; nor short of Calicut, where it came from. . . . Look here again, there's a golden cup! I bought that of one that was out with Pizarro in Peru. And look here, again!"—and the old man gloated over the treasure.

"And whom do you think I kept all these for? These were for her wedding-day—for her wedding-day. For your wedding-day, if you'd been minded, sir! Yes, yours, sir! And yet, I believe, I was so ambitious that I would not have let her marry under an earl, all the while I was pretending to be too proud to throw her at the head of a squire's son. Ah well! There was my idol, sir. I made her mad, I pampered her up with gewgaws and vanity; and then, because

my idol was just what I had made her, I turned again and rent her.

"And now," said he, pointing to the open chest, "that was what I meant; and that" (pointing to the empty bed), "was what God meant. Never mind. Come down-stairs and finish your wine. I see you don't care about it all. Why should you! you are not her father, and you may thank God you are not. Go, and be merry while you can, young sir! . . . . And yet, all this might have been yours. And—but I don't suppose you are one to be won by money—but all this may be yours still, and twenty thousand pounds to boot."

"I want no money, sir, but what I can earn with my own sword."

"Earn my money, then!"

"What on earth do you want of me?"

"To keep your oath," said Salterne, clutching his arm, and looking up into his face with searching eyes.

"My oath! How did you know that I had one?"

"Ah! you were well ashamed of it, I suppose, next day! A drunken frolic all about a poor merchant's daughter! But there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed, nor done in the closet, that is not proclaimed on the house-tops."

"Ashamed of it, sir, I never was: but I have a right to ask how you came to know it?"

"What if a poor fat squinny rogue, a low-born fellow even as I am, whom you had baffled and made a laughing-stock, had come to me in my loneliness

and sworn before God that if you honourable gentlemen would not keep your words, he the clown would?"

"John Brimblecombe?"

"And what if I had brought him where I have brought you, and shown him what I have shown you, and, instead of standing as stiff as any Spaniard, as you do, he had thrown himself on his knees by that bedside, and wept and prayed, sir, till he opened my hard heart for the first and last time, and I fell down on my sinful knees and wept and prayed by him?"

"I am not given to weeping, Mr. Salterne," said Amyas; "and as for praying, I don't know yet what I have to pray for, on her account: my business is to work. Show me what I can do; and when you have done that, it will be full time to upbraid me with not doing it."

"You can cut that fellow's throat."

"It will take a long arm to reach him."

"I suppose it is as easy to sail to the Spanish main as it was to sail round the world."

"My good sir," said Amyas, "I have at this moment no more worldly goods than my clothes and my sword; so how to sail to the Spanish main, I don't quite see."

"And do you suppose, sir, that I should hint to you of such a voyage, if I meant you to be at the charge of it? No, sir, if you want two thousand pounds, or five, to fit a ship, take it! Take it, sir! I hoarded money for my child: and now I will spend it to avenge her."

Amyas was silent for awhile; the old man still

held his arm, still looked up steadfastly and fiercely in his face.

"Bring me home that man's head, and take ship, prizes—all! Keep the gain, sir, and give me the revenge!"

"Gain? Do you think I need bribing, sir? What kept me silent was the thought of my mother: I dare not go without her leave."

Salterne made a gesture of impatience.

"I dare not, sir; I must obey my parent, whatever else I do."

"Humph!" said he. "If others had obeyed theirs as well!—But you are right, Captain Leigh, right. You will prosper, whoever else does not. Now, sir, good-night, if you will let me be the first to say so. My old eyes grow heavy early now-a-days. Perhaps it's old age, perhaps it's sorrow."

So Amyas departed to the inn, and there, to his great joy, found Cary waiting for him, from whom he learnt details, which must be kept for another chapter, and which I shall tell, for convenience' sake, in my own words and not in his.

CHAPTER XV.

HOW MR. JOHN BRIMBLECOMBE UNDERSTOOD THE NATURE OF AN OATH.

> "The Kynge of Spayn is a foul paynim,
> And lieveth on Mahound;
> And pity it were that lady fayre
> Should marry a heathen hound."—*Kyng Estmere.*

ABOUT six weeks after the duel, the miller at Stow had come up to the great house in much tribulation, to borrow the bloodhounds. Rose Salterne had vanished in the night, no man knew whither.

Sir Richard was in Bideford: but the old steward took on himself to send for the keepers, and down went the serving-men to the Mill with all the idle lads of the parish at their heels, thinking a maiden-hunt very good sport: and of course taking a view of the case as favourable as possible to Rose.

They reviled the miller and his wife roundly for hard-hearted old heathens; and had no doubt that they had driven the poor maid to throw herself over cliff, or drown herself in the sea; while all the women of Stow, on the other hand, were of unanimous opinion that the hussy had "gone off" with some bad fellow; and that pride was sure to have a fall, and so forth.

The facts of the case were, that all Rose's trinkets were left behind, so that she had at least gone off honestly; and nothing seemed to be missing, but some of her linen, which old Anthony the steward broadly hinted was likely to be found in other people's boxes. The only trace was a little footmark under her bedroom window. On that the bloodhound was laid (of course in leash), and after a premonitory whimper, lifted up his mighty voice, and started bell-mouthed through the garden gate, and up the lane, towing behind him the panting keeper, till they reached the downs above, and went straight away for Marslandmouth, where the whole posse comitatus pulled up breathless at the door of Lucy Passmore.

Lucy, as perhaps I should have said before, was now a widow, and found her widowhood not altogether contrary to her interest. Her augury about her old man had been fulfilled; he had never returned since the night on which he put to sea with Eustace and the Jesuits.

"Some natural tears she shed, but dried them soon"—

as many of them, at least, as were not required for purposes of business; and then determined to prevent suspicion by a bold move; she started off to Stow, and told Lady Grenvile a most pathetic tale: how her husband had gone out to pollock fishing, and never returned: but how she had heard horsemen gallop past her window in the dead of night, and was sure they must have been the Jesuits, and that they had carried off her old man by main force, and probably, after making use of his services, had killed and

salted him down for provision on their voyage back to the Pope at Rome; after which she ended by entreating protection against those "Popish skulkers up to Chapel," who were sworn to do her a mischief; and by an appeal to Lady Grenvile's sense of justice, as to whether the Queen ought not to allow her a pension, for having had her heart's love turned into a sainted martyr by the hands of idolatrous traitors.

Lady Grenvile (who had a great opinion of Lucy's medical skill, and always sent for her if one of the children had a "housty," *i.e.* sore throat) went forth and pleaded the case before Sir Richard with such effect, that Lucy was on the whole better off than ever for the next two or three years. But now—what had she to do with Rose's disappearance? and, indeed, where was she herself? Her door was fast; and round it her flock of goats stood, crying in vain for her to come and milk them; while from the down above, her donkeys, wandering at their own sweet will, answered the bay of the bloodhound with a burst of harmony.

"They'm laughing at us, keper, they neddies; sure enough, we'm lost our labour here."

But the bloodhound, after working about the door awhile, turned down the glen, and never stopped till he reached the margin of the sea.

"They'm taken water. Let's go back, and rout out the old witch's house."

"'Tis just like that old Lucy, to lock a poor maid into shame."

And returning, they attacked the cottage, and by

a general plebiscitum, ransacked the little dwelling, partly in indignation, and partly if the truth be told, in the hope of plunder: but plunder there was none. Lucy had decamped with all her movable wealth, saving the huge black cat among the embers, who at the sight of the bloodhound vanished up the chimney (some said with a strong smell of brimstone), and being viewed outside, was chased into the woods, where she lived, I doubt not, many happy years, a scourge to all the rabbits of the glen.

The goats and donkeys were driven off up to Stow; and the mob returned, a little ashamed of themselves when their brief wrath was past; and a little afraid, too, of what Sir Richard might say.

He, when he returned, sold the donkeys and goats, and gave the money to the poor, promising to refund the same, if Lucy returned and gave herself up to justice. But Lucy did not return; and her cottage, from which the neighbours shrank as from a haunted place, remained as she had left it, and crumbled slowly down to four fern-covered walls, past which the little stream went murmuring on from pool to pool—the only voice, for many a year to come, which broke the silence of that lonely glen.

A few days afterwards, Sir Richard, on his way from Bideford to Stow, looked in at Clovelly Court, and mentioned, with a "by the by," news which made Will Cary leap from his seat almost to the ceiling. What it was we know already.

"And there is no clue?" asked old Cary; for his son was speechless.

"Only this; I hear that some fellow prowling about the cliffs that night, saw a pinnace running for Lundy."

Will rose, and went hastily out of the room.

In half-an-hour, he and three or four armed servants were on board a trawling-skiff, and away to Lundy. He did not return for three days, and then brought news; that an elderly man, seemingly a foreigner, had been lodging for some months past in a part of the ruined Moresco Castle, which was tenanted by one John Braund; that a few weeks since a younger man, a foreigner also, had joined him from on board a ship: the ship a Flushinger, or Easterling of some sort. The ship came and went more than once; and the young man in her. A few days since, a lady and her maid, a stout woman, came with him up to the castle, and talked with the elder man a long while in secret; abode there all night; and then all three sailed in the morning. The fishermen on the beach had heard the young man call the other father. He was a very still man, much as a mass-priest might be. More they did not know, or did not choose to know.

Whereon, Old Cary and Sir Richard sent Will on a second trip with the parish constable of Hartland (in which huge parish, for its sins, is situate the Isle of Lundy, ten miles out at sea); who returned with the body of the hapless John Braund, farmer, fisherman, smuggler, etc.; which worthy, after much fruitless examination (wherein examinate was afflicted with extreme deafness and loss of memory), departed to Exeter gaol, on a charge of "harbouring priests, Jesuits, gipsies, and other suspect and traitorous persons."

Poor John Braund, whose motive for entertaining the said ugly customers had probably been not treason, but a wife, seven children, and arrears of rent, did not thrive under the change from the pure air of Lundy to the pestiferous one of Exeter gaol, made infamous, but two years after (if I recollect right), by a "black assizes," nearly as fatal as that more notorious one at Oxford; for in it, "whether by the stench of the prisoners, or by a stream of foul air," judge, jury, counsel, and bystanders, numbering among them many members of the best families in Devon, sickened in court, and died miserably within a few days.

John Braund, then, took the gaol-fever in a week, and died raving in that noisome den: his secret, if he had one, perished with him, and nothing but vague suspicion was left as to Rose Salterne's fate. That she had gone off with the Spaniard, few doubted; but whither, and in what character? On that last subject, be sure, no mercy was shown to her by many a Bideford dame, who had hated the poor girl simply for her beauty; and by many a country lady, who had "always expected that the girl would be brought to ruin by the absurd notice, beyond what her station had a right to, which was taken of her:" while every young maiden aspired to fill the throne which Rose had abdicated. So that, on the whole, Bideford considered itself as going on as well without poor Rose as it had done with her, or even better. And though she lingered in some hearts still as a fair dream, the business and the bustle of each day soon swept that dream away, and her place knew her no more.

And Will Cary?

He was for awhile like a man distracted. He heaped himself with all manner of superfluous reproaches, for having (as he said) first brought the Rose into disgrace, and then driven her into the arms of the Spaniard; while St. Leger, who was a sensible man enough, tried in vain to persuade him that the fault was not his at all: that the two must have been attached to each other long before the quarrel; that it must have ended so, sooner or later; that old Salterne's harshness, rather than Cary's wrath, had hastened the catastrophe; and finally, that the Rose and her fortunes were, now that she had eloped with a Spaniard, not worth troubling their heads about. Poor Will would not be so comforted. He wrote off to Frank at Whitehall, telling him the whole truth, calling himself all fools and villains, and entreating Frank's forgiveness; to which he received an answer, in which Frank said that Will had no reason to accuse himself; that these strange attachments were due to a synastria, or sympathy of the stars, which ruled the destinies of each person, to fight against which was to fight against the heavens themselves; that he, as a brother of the Rose, was bound to believe, nay, to assert at the sword's point if need were, that the incomparable Rose of Torridge could make none but a worthy and virtuous choice; and that to the man whom she had honoured by her affection was due on their part, Spaniard and Papist though he might be, all friendship, worship, and loyal faith for evermore.

And honest Will took it all for gospel, little dream-

ing what agony of despair, what fearful suspicions, what bitter prayers, this letter had cost to the gentle heart of Francis Leigh.

He showed the letter triumphantly to St. Leger; and he was quite wise enough to gainsay no word of it, at least aloud; but quite wise enough, also, to believe in secret that Frank looked on the matter in quite a different light: however, he contented himself with saying,—

"The man is an angel as his mother is!" and there the matter dropped for a few days, till one came forward who had no mind to let it drop, and that was Jack Brimblecombe, now curate of Hartland town, and "passing rich on forty pounds a-year."

"I hope no offence, Mr. William; but when are you and the rest going after—after her?" The name stuck in his throat.

Cary was taken aback.

"What's that to thee, Catiline the blood-drinker?" asked he, trying to laugh it off.

"What? Don't laugh at me, sir, for it's no laughing matter. I drank that night nought worse, I expect, than red wine. Whatever it was, we swore our oaths, Mr. Cary; and oaths are oaths, say I."

"Of course, Jack, of course; but to go to look for her—and when we've found her, cut her lover's throat —Absurd, Jack, even if she were worth looking for, or his throat worth cutting. Tut, tut, tut——"

But Jack looked steadfastly in his face, and after some silence,

"How far is it to the Caraccas, then, sir?"

"What is that to thee, man?"

"Why, he was made governor thereof, I hear; so that would be the place to find her?"

"You don't mean to go thither to seek her?" shouted Cary, forcing a laugh.

"That depends on whether I can go, sir; but if I can scrape the money together, or get a berth on board some ship, why, God's will must be done."

Will looked at him, to see if he had been drinking, or gone mad; but the little pigs' eyes were both sane and sober.

Will knew no answer. To laugh at the poor fellow was easy enough; to deny that he was right, that he was a hero and cavalier, outdoing romance itself in faithfulness, not so easy; and Cary, in the first impulse, wished him at the bottom of the bay for shaming him. Of course, his own plan of letting ill alone was the rational, prudent, irreproachable plan, and just what any gentleman in his senses would have done; but here was a vulgar, fat curate, out of his senses, determined not to let ill alone, but to do something, as Cary felt in his heart, of a far diviner stamp.

"Well," said Jack, in his stupid steadfast way, "it's a very bad look-out; but mother's pretty well off, if father dies, and the maidens are stout wenches enough, and will make tidy servants, please the Lord. And you'll see that they come to no harm, Mr. William, for old acquaintance' sake, if I never come back."

Cary was silent with amazement.

"And, Mr. William, you know me for an honest

man, I hope. Will you lend me a five pound, and take my books in pawn for them, just to help me out."

"Are you mad, or in a dream? You will never find her!"

"That's no reason why I shouldn't do my duty in looking for her, Mr. William."

"But, my good fellow, even if you get to the Indies, you will be clapt into the Inquisition, and burnt alive, as sure as your name is Jack."

"I know that," said he in a doleful tone; "and a sore struggle of the flesh I have had about it; for I am a great coward, Mr. William, a dirty coward, and always was, as you know: but maybe the Lord will take care of me, as He does of little children and drunken men; and if not, Mr. Will, I'd sooner burn, and have it over, than go on this way any longer, I would!" and Jack burst out blubbering.

"What way, my dear old lad?" said Will, softened, as he well might be.

"Why, not—not to know whether—whether—whether she's married to him or not—her that I looked up to as an angel of God, as pure as the light of day; and knew she was too good for a poor pot-head like me; and prayed for her every night, God knows, that she might marry a king, if there was one fit for her—and I not to know whether she's living in sin or not, Mr. William.—It's more than I can bear, and there's an end of it. And if she is married to him, they keep no faith with heretics; they can dissolve the marriage, or make away with her into the

Inquisition; burn her, Mr. Cary, as soon as burn me, the devils incarnate!"

Cary shuddered; the fact, true and palpable as it was, had never struck him before.

"Yes! or make her deny her God by torments, if she hasn't done it already for love to that—— I know how love will make a body sell his soul, for I've been in love. Don't you laugh at me, Mr. Will, or I shall go mad!"

"God knows, I was never less inclined to laugh at you in my life, my brave old Jack."

"Is it so, then? Bless you for that word!" and Jack held out his hand. "But what will become of my soul, after my oath, if I don't seek her out, just to speak to her, to warn her, for God's sake, even if it did no good; just to set before her the Lord's curse on idolatry and Antichrist, and those who deny Him for the sake of any creature, though I can't think He would be hard on her,—for who could? But I must speak all the same. The Lord has laid the burden on me, and done it must be. God help me!"

"Jack," said Cary, "if this is your duty, it is others'."

"No, sir, I don't say that; you're a layman, but I am a deacon, and the chaplain of you all, and sworn to seek out Christ's sheep scattered up and down this naughty world, and that innocent lamb first of all."

"You have sheep at Hartland, Jack, already."

"There's plenty better than I will tend them, when I am gone; but none that will tend her, because none

love her like me, and they won't venture. Who will? It can't be expected, and no shame to them?"

"I wonder what Amyas Leigh would say to all this, if he were at home?"

"Say? He'd do. He isn't one for talking. He'd go through fire and water for her, you trust him, Will Cary; and call me an ass if he won't."

"Will you wait then till he comes back, and ask him?"

"He may not be back for a year and more."

"Hear reason, Jack. If you will wait like a rational and patient man, instead of rushing blindfold on your ruin, something may be done."

"You think so!"

"I cannot promise; but——"

"But promise me one thing. Do you tell Mr. Frank what I say—or rather, I'll warrant, if I knew the truth, he has said the very same thing himself already."

"You are out there, old man; for here is his own handwriting."

Jack read the letter and sighed bitterly.

"Well, I did take him for another guess sort of fine gentleman. Still, if my duty isn't his, it's mine all the same. I judge no man; but I go, Mr. Cary."

"But go you shall not till Amyas returns. As I live, I will tell your father, Jack, unless you promise; and you dare not disobey him."

"I don't know even that, for conscience' sake," said Jack, doubtfully.

"At least, you stay and dine here, old fellow, and

we will settle whether you are to break the fifth commandment or not, over good brewed sack."

Now a good dinner was (as we know) what Jack loved, and loved too oft in vain; so he submitted for the nonce, and Cary thought, ere he went, that he had talked him pretty well round. At least he went home, and was seen no more for a week.

But at the end of that time he returned, and said with a joyful voice—

"I have settled all, Mr. Will. The parson of Welcombe will serve my church for two Sundays, and I am away for London town, to speak to Mr. Frank."

"To London? How wilt get there?"

"On Shanks his mare," said Jack, pointing to his bandy legs. "But I expect I can get a lift on board of a coaster so far as Bristol, and it's no way on to signify, I hear."

Cary tried in vain to dissuade him; and then forced on him a small loan, with which away went Jack, and Cary heard no more of him for three weeks.

At last he walked into Clovelly Court again just before supper-time, thin and leg-weary, and sat himself down among the serving-men till Will appeared.

Will took him up above the salt, and made much of him (which indeed the honest fellow much needed), and after supper asked him in private how he had sped.

"I have learnt a lesson, Mr. William. I've learnt that there is one on earth loves her better than I, if she had but had the wit to have taken him."

"But what says he of going to seek her?"

"He says what I say, Go! and he says what you say, Wait."

"Go? Impossible! How can that agree with his letter?"

"That's no concern of mine. Of course, being nearer heaven than I am, he sees clearer what he should say and do than I can see for him. Oh, Mr. Will, that's not a man, he's an angel of God; but he's dying, Mr. Will."

"Dying?"

"Yes, faith, of love for her. I can see it in his eyes, and hear it in his voice; but I am of tougher hide, and stiffer clay, and so you see I can't die even if I tried. But I'll obey my betters, and wait."

And so Jack went home to his parish that very evening, weary as he was, in spite of all entreaties to pass the night at Clovelly. But he had left behind him thoughts in Cary's mind, which gave their owner no rest by day or night, till the touch of a seeming accident made them all start suddenly into shape, as a touch of the freezing water covers it in an instant with crystals of ice.

He was lounging (so he told Amyas) one murky day on Bideford quay, when up came Mr. Salterne. Cary had shunned him of late, partly from delicacy, partly from dislike of his supposed hard-heartedness. But this time they happened to meet full; and Cary could not pass without speaking to him.

"Well, Mr. Salterne, and how goes on the shipping trade?"

"Well enough, sir, if some of you young gentlemen would but follow Mr. Leigh's example, and go forth to find us stay-at-homes new markets for our ware."

"What? you want to be rid of us, eh?"

"I don't know why I should, sir. We shan't cross each other now, sir, whatever might have been once. But if I were you, I should be in the Indies about now, if I were not fighting the Queen's battles nearer home."

"In the Indies? I should make but a poor hand of Drake's trade." And so the conversation dropped; but Cary did not forget the hint.

"So, lad, to make an end of a long story," said he to Amyas; "if you are minded to take the old man's offer, so am I: and Westward-ho with you, come foul come fair."

"It will be but a wild-goose chase, Will."

"If she is with him, we shall find her at La Guayra. If she is not, and the villain has cast her off down the wind, that will be only an additional reason for making an example of him."

"And if neither of them are there, Will, the Plate-fleets will be; so it will be our own shame if we come home empty-handed. But will your father let you run such a risk?"

"My father!" said Cary, laughing. "He has just now so good hope of a long string of little Carys to fill my place, that he will be in no lack of an heir, come what will."

"Little Carys?"

"I tell you truth. I think he must have had a sly sup of that fountain of perpetual youth, which our friend Don Guzman's grandfather went to seek in Florida; for some twelvemonth since, he must needs marry a tenant's buxom daughter; and Mistress Abishag Jewell has brought him one fat baby already. So I shall go, back to Ireland, or with you: but somewhere. I can't abide the thing's squalling, any more than I can seeing Mistress Abishag sitting in my poor dear mother's place, and informing me every other day that she is come of an illustrious house, because she is (or is not) third cousin seven times removed to my father's old friend, Bishop Jewell of glorious memory. I had three-parts of a quarrel with the dear old man the other day; for after one of her peacock-bouts, I couldn't for the life of me help saying, that as the Bishop had written an Apology for the people of England, my father had better conjure up his ghost to write an apology for him, and head it, "Why green heads should grow on gray shoulders.'"

"You impudent villain! And what did he say?"

"Laughed till he cried again, and told me if I did not like it I might leave it; which is just what I intend to do. Only mind, if we go, we must needs take Jack Brimblecombe with us, or he will surely heave himself over Harty-point, and his ghost will haunt us to our dying day."

"Jack shall go. None deserves it better."

After which there was a long consultation on practical matters, and it was concluded that Amyas should go up to London and sound Frank and his mother,

before any further steps were taken. The other brethren of the Rose were scattered far and wide, each at his post, and St. Leger had returned to his uncle, so that it would be unfair to them, as well as a considerable delay, to demand of them any fulfilment of their vow. And, as Amyas sagely remarked, "Too many cooks spoil the broth, and half-a-dozen gentlemen aboard one ship are as bad as two kings of Brentford."

With which maxim he departed next morning for London, leaving Yeo with Cary.

END OF VOL. I.

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